

Happy the Innocent, whose equal thoughts,
Are free from Anguish, as they are from faults.

Waller.

103 k

Virtue in humble Life:

containing

Reflections on the reciprocal duties of the wealthy and indigent, the master and the servant:

Thoughts

on the various situations, passions, prejudices, and virtues of mankind, drawn from real characters:

FABLES APPLICABLE TO THE SUBJECTS:

ANECDOTES OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD:

the result of long experience and observation.

IN A DIALOGUE

between a father and his daughter, in rural scenes.

A Manual of Devotion,

comprehending extracts from eminent poets.

In two volumes.

Vol. I.

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By Jonas Hanway, Esq;

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MDCCLXXIV.

1

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO

Mrs. MONTAGU.

MADAM,

EVERY author derives a real, or imaginary importance, from the dignity of the perſon, whoſe name he prefixes to his work. Methinks I now realize this conceit; and exult, by ſtanding high in the liſt, as a candidate for glory!

YOUR zeal, Madam, like that of martyrs of old, has ſentenced you to ſuffer: but there needs no pomp of words to tell the world, that if there is any ſpark of true devotion, in theſe pages, it was lighted at the altar of your piety and judgment; for they owe their exiſtence to your opinion, that my former publication (*a*)

(*a*) Farmer's Advice to his Daughter, 3 vols. 12mo. 1770.

might do *more good*, were it caſt into the form of a *dialogue*.

You did not imagine, I preſume, that I ſhould devote ſo conſiderable a part of my leiſure hours, to a *new work*; or let my philanthropy flow in ſo copious a ſtream. You did not think I ſhould rove from field to grove, and garden to garden, through three or four ſummers, in hopes of gathering flowers fit to preſent you.

I CANNOT give you a repaſt ſeaſoned with *Attic* ſalt; nor enlivened with the zeſt of modern elegancy: but if amidſt theſe paſtoral ſcenes, you ſhould find any *oak*, in argument; or *ſweet-briar*, in perſuaſive invitation to virtue; you, who are a miſtreſs of the human heart, will not deſpiſe the ſincerity of the villager. If you find his breaſt beat time with moral rectitude, and religious hope; and that from ſound reaſoning, he learns to live and die; you will think it no diſgrace to befriend him. Who would the firſt of human kind moſt wiſh to ſerve?

If the detail of this honeſt man's life, gliding on gently in a peaceful ſtream, ſhould draw down a torrent of *unprovoked* criticiſm; the humble peaſant, in his turn, may ſmile at the laboured art of learned abſurdity.

My ambition is to convey uſeful inſtruction, in words, not vulgar, yet intelligible to the *unlettered*. I mean to ſhew the genuine effects of *filial duty*, and *paternal love*, in hearts impreſſed with a deep ſenſe of religion. I hope you will not find, in theſe converſations, any enthuſiaſtic or fanatical piety; or any ambiguous ſentiment, that ſoothes the corruption of the heart; or flatters our reigning diſſipation.

I have made *my* voyage round the *moral* world; not ſo much for the amuſement of the *great*, or the inſtruction of the *ſkilful*, as the ſervice of the *meek* and *upright*. In the words of your charming *ward*, *bright Fancy's* ſweeteſt child,

——— "*Here is my butt,*
And very ſea-mark of my utmoſt ſail;"

and

and This, the richeſt merchandize which I have brought home: how far the fortunes of other men will be the better for it, I know not: to myſelf I have ſecured the moſt intrinſic wealth, by a zealous attempt to ſerve them; and I am, with no leſs ſincerity and reſpect,

MADAM,

Your much obliged,

and devoted ſervant,

Red-Lion-Square,
Feb. 1774.

Jonas Hanway.

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ERRORS,

Page 65. line 30. *for* as a, *read* a

67. 32. off of, *r.* off

86. 3. requires, *r.* require

112. 24. *dele* who

150. 12. *for* prevents, *r.* prevent

173. 8. immortanty, *r.* immortality

217. 37. duelling, *r.* dueling

219. 20. Charing-croſs, *r.* Chairing-croſs

32. Bedlam, *r.* Bethlem

338. 25. *dele* that

389. 20. *for* lyes, *r.* lies

430. 31. queſtione, *r.* queſtion

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

To the Candid and Intelligent Reader.

Proem.

THE following ſheets are the production of broken hours ſnatched from the *vortex* of diſſipation, and depoſited in the ſhrine of *piety* and *humanity*. It is a more pleaſing taſk to recommend ſuch ſentiments as promote happineſs, than expoſe the infirmities which produce miſery: and more practicable to flatter men, not totally abandoned, into a love of virtue, than uſeful to quarrel with them for being no better than they are; yet ſtill we muſt fix our hearts on *truth!*

If we recollect how the preſs has groaned of late with books, which have poiſoned the imaginations of our *youth*, ſuch efforts as mine may claim a candid reception. I addreſs my labours to the *ſimple* rather than the *refined* in taſte; at the ſame time that I eſteem piety and ſimplicity, as qualities with which the loweſt in condition are *rich*, and *without* them the higheſt *poor*.

Ignorance the cauſe of vice and irreligion.

There is ſomething very ungrateful in the notion of keeping the common people in ignorance, as if this was beſt calculated for a land of *freedom*. Time and chance happen to all; but we need not be afraid of levelling conditions, on account of any ſuperior knowledge acquired by the common education of the inferior claſſes of mankind.

The vulgar notion is, that the more *ignorant* the common people are, the more humble and ſubmiſſive they will be: I call this a *vulgar notion*, for ignorance in a free country operates very differently; it creates a brutiſh ferocity, and renders the people dupes to every artful demagogue who has ſkill enough to flatter them. Neither doth experience warrant the belief, that knowledge creates a repugnance to virtue; or that virtue ever deſtroyed a people.

Examples of folly being ever before the eyes of the common run of mankind, the objects of wiſdom muſt be alſo preſented to them, or how are they to come at any antidote againſt the poiſon of ſin? They have the ſublime doctrine, and clear precepts of chriſtianity laid open to their view, and they are commanded to read; but this very command ſuppoſes a due ſenſe of ſubordination, and juſt notions of the virtue of *obedience*.

Where are we to ſeek for that pure ſimplicity which has diſtinguiſhed ſome ages? We are apt to denominate a people uncultivated, when their cuſtoms and manners differ from our own: yet it is obvious that where humanity is exerciſed with the moſt perſuaſive gentleneſs, there the people act moſt agreeably to the true ſtandard of univerſal benevolence. If they have a ſteady belief in an *inviſible power*, to whom they think ſuch conduct will be pleaſing, and that they ſhall be happy if it proves ſo, we may venture to pronounce them happy: for though we ſhould have the moſt knowledge, yet if we ſuffer ourſelves to be miſguided by our paſſions, we ſhall at length plunge ourſelves into miſery.

State of mankind, in regard to religion.

Mankind have, in all ages, beheld the moſt dreadful cataſtrophes ariſe from the want of knowledge in the things which belong to their peace, and from the blindneſs created by vice: To this we may impute *idolatry*, and the groſſeſt deviations from the worſhip of the true God: and to the ſame cauſe aſcribe the galling chains of *ſlavery*, in which ſo great a part of the human race are bound.

If men were ſenſible of their true intereſt, there would be no ſuch thing as *tyranny*; whereas the irreligion, barbarity of manners, and the habit of violating divine and human laws,

laws, to what cauſe can we impute ſuch evils, but to *ignorance*, ſupported by perverſeneſs? It is true, that *knowledge of the world* leads ſome into *vice*; but knowledge of God, and of themſelves, reſtores them to their proper happineſs.

Where the light of the goſpel ſhines brighteſt, there ought the *morals* of a people to be moſt pure; and where there is a *proper knowledge* of *men* and *things*, there will the guiltleſs be beſt qualified to guard themſelves againſt the *ſnares* of the world. The innocence of the dove is recommended to us by the Son of God, but ſo is the *wiſdom* of the ſerpent.

Knowledge in reſpect to religion.

With regard to difference in religious tenets, which may furniſh matter for ſome animadverſions, I intereſt my readers in no *diſpute*: I only ſhew why they ought to be moderate and charitable towards others, and ſteady in their reſpective modes of worſhip, according to the practice of the beſt *chriſtians*; obſerving that thoſe who are perplexed by a diverſity of opinions, are often glad of an excuſe to ſhake off all faiths.

Objections anſwered in regard to pleaſure.

Neither do I mean to exclaim againſt pleaſures which chriſtianity warrants, or repreſent any omiſſion as productive of deſpondency, on any other principle, than as ſin unrepented of, muſt terminate in ſtupidity or deſpair. The *New Teſtament* is the baſis of all our *fears* in regard to a future ſtate; yet we put this book into the hands of the common people; and for a good reaſon, for it is no leſs the foundation of their peace and comfort, their *temporal* joys, and hopes of *eternal* bliſs!

Natural turn of the mind to religion.

There needs no argument to prove, that in general we are more affected by *material* than by *ſpiritual* objects; or that the reaſoning which almoſt every one acknowledges the importance of, operates with ſo much the leſs vigour on the mind where the object is diſtant, than weaker arguments where things are near. But ſtill the mind looks up to its original, and we find in ourſelves a natural inclination to religion, inſomuch that when it is properly called forth, it will act with energy, and prove that many of our iniquitous deeds, which in general are aſcribed to the *corruption* of our nature, ariſe from the prevalency of *cuſtom* and *example*.

If

Prevalency of cuſtom.

If *half* the apparent folly and wickedneſs we now find in the world, could poſſibly be concealed, the *other half* would ſoon be diminiſhed very conſiderably. We are ſtill ſhocked with groſs inſtances of impiety, and expreſs our ſurprize, even when the moſt abandoned part of mankind are guilty of great outrages againſt humanity and religion: This ſeems to be a proof, that *virtue* is ſtill in reputation, though it is too calm and ſilent in its nature to proclaim itſelf on the houſe-top. In ſpite of all the madneſs of the *heart*, or *head*, which prevails amongſt us, we *exiſt*; we maintain things in tolerable good order, and we hope for better days.

Particular inſtance of negligence and impiety, by inattention to the ſacrament.

It is dangerous to depreciate human nature above meaſure; and general topics of declamation againſt irreligion are, for this reaſon, frequently exceptionable; but we are not therefore to be reſerved where evils are notorious. Crimes of omiſſion do not uſually ſtrike us like acts of violence; but there are ſome of ſuch a nature as diſgrace common ſenſe, while they proclaim ſuch impiety that we know not what truſt to repoſe in each other, on any religious principle. I appeal to the hearts of thouſands of maſters and miſtreſſes of families!—Do they know if their *domeſtics* are *chriſtians?* I do not mean in any abſtracted, fanatical, or viſionary ſenſe, but ſimply in regard to the great article of our *faith* and *obedience*, in the *remembrance of Chriſt, in the Sacrament of his Supper?*—Is not our negligence, in this inſtance, carried to an amazing height? Do we not offend againſt our *reaſon* as well as our *faith?* Can thoſe be *chriſtians themſelves* who are indifferent whether others be ſuch? If by the word *chriſtianity* we underſtand ſomething which is not merely *ideal*, but muſt be carried into *practice*, thouſands of us ſtand condemned on this ſingle indictment.

I have laboured this point *(a)*, though it is a ſad conſideration that any perſuaſives ſhould be neceſſary: Some people think, that nothing ought to be ſaid of this chriſtian duty more than of any other; as if particular perſuaſives were

(a) Pages 35 to 54, and 243.

b

were the cauſe of the reluctance ſhewn to the thing itſelf. I have heard of an apoſtolical clergyman, who, obſerving the congregation turn their backs on the communion table, cried out from his pulpit, *Fellow chriſtians, where are you going? I am about to celebrate the death of Chriſt!* No one dared reply, "So you may if you pleaſe, but I do not think any ſuch thing neceſſary to me." Yet this was their ſentiment, or they revolted againſt their own hearts.

Duty of parents and teachers.

We are, by the general tenor of our religion, to ſtudy and obey the *laws of God*; and as an inſtance of the divine compaſſion, the *means* whereby we may attain a competent knowledge in the duties required, and the proper habits for practiſing ſuch duties, are marked out to us in the moſt legible characters. How the *parent* or the *prieſt*, the *teacher* or *maſter* of the family, in high life or in low, can think themſelves abſolved from the deepeſt concern in this matter, is paſt my comprehenſion. The difficulty which ariſes from the din of a multitude of ſpectators, and the objects of ſenſe which ſurround us, are not ſufficient excuſes: perſons in ſuch ſtations ſhould *prompt* the young actors, and keep them in conſtant remembrance that they are preparing to tread the ſtage of life, and perform a part as candidates for an immortal prize. They ſhould ſhew them *religion*, arrayed in the attracting luſtre of *peace* and *good-will*; clothed with all the graces of the goſpel, diffuſing *ſmiles* of beneficence, and ſpeaking to all, who will open their ears to hear, the language of *hope*, *faith*, and *charity*, and the promiſe of the glorious rewards of virtue. If religion is ſeen in ſuch a point of view, the *gay* cannot reſiſt her charms, and the *obdurate* will not be impenetrably deaf to the voice of the *charmer*. When our *teachers* repreſent the ſtate of a judgment to come, to the *underſtanding*, as well as the *paſſions*, in the moſt perſuaſive terms, the native *candor* of the heart will reflect *truth*, as from a mirror; and *wiſdom* will acknowledge her children.

Duty of the clergy.

It is the policy and happineſs of all civilized nations to entertain a certain order of men, who are dignified by no leſs an appellation than *the immediate ſervants*

of the moſt high God: and if it were not for the *regular clergy*, the ſenſe of being accountable after death would be loſt, or prove inſufficient even to create ſuch reſtraints as are eſſential to our ideas of the Being of God. But neither the precepts nor examples, neither the dignity nor character of ſuch perſons alone, are ſufficient to anſwer the purpoſes for which they were intended. Hence have ariſen many ſtrong reaſons for *philoſophers*, *patriots*, and the moſt diſtinguiſhed friends of mankind in all ages, to endeavour by their books, their example, and the tenor of their *converſation*, to aſſiſt in cheriſhing a ſenſe of religion among men, and promote the ſame cauſe with equal zeal, yet without invading the province of the regular prieſthood, as ignorant enthuſiaſts have often done.

Attention to inferiors.

Whatever is true in this reſpect, in regard to our children, extends alſo to our ſervants and inferiors. No accidental circumſtances can ſuperſede the duties of religion and humanity: To *neglect* any fellow-creature whom we can ſuccour, muſt be offenſive to God: as to *deſpiſe* any one, on account of his inferiority of condition, affords a ſtrong preſumption that we are ignorant of the true nature of our own.

Religion, the baſis of government.

It is likewiſe obvious, that as men depend on government for temporal felicity, government depends on religion. *Stateſmen* are obliged to confeſs that the *œconomy of life*, as it regards the controul of human paſſions, is an object too fluctuating to be kept in its proper orbit, without the gravitating power of religion. Neither the rod of the civil magiſtrate, nor the ſword of the military officer, can accompliſh the work, without ſome reference to a *judgment to come*. Without this, we can have but a ſlender ſecurity for life or property: Men would commit the groſſeſt crimes in ſecret, and evade human laws; or *death*, under the hand of the executioner, would loſe the greateſt part of its terrors. Without *religion*, the united arts of civilization would be inadequate to the maintenance of concord: the peace and harmony of ſocial intercourſe would be turned into confuſion, and the earth become an habitation of ſavages and a den of thieves.

The

The end and deſign of government is *defence* and *protection*; but the idea of it cannot be limited to *public* inſtitutes, we muſt have recourſe alſo to *parental* authority: This is the firſt chapter in the code of laws, as appointed by God himſelf, and the more immediate cauſe of the homage we learn to pay to him as the great Parent of mankind. To this we are trained from our infancy: and the father and the mother, the maſter and miſtreſs, muſt co-operate with legiſlators, or the gallows will fall with the weight of delinquency. Of this, experience affords abundant teſtimony in the characters of many poor wretches of both ſexes, who have loſt their parents early, and never had the advantage of inſtruction, or any good example before their eyes. *The neceſſity of the authority of parents and maſters.*

Such piety is out of faſhion, but it will not be out of countenance, while the nature of *good* and *evil* remains unchanged. Every diminution of the power and authority of parents or maſters, ought to be regarded as a ſtab to the conſtitution of the moral world: We ſhould conſider them as bound by a tacit compact with the community, from which themſelves derive protection, never to loſe ſight of their duty: Thoſe who talk of the love of their country, and are negligent of their pupils, and their own houſhold, act ſo little like the patriarchs of old, or real friends to human kind, that we muſt ſuſpect their ſenſe, or their ſincerity. In the ſame manner to declaim on the rights of fellow-ſubjects, and make no proviſion for their happineſs as flowing from moral rectitude, is trifling with both divine and human laws.

We are become ſo *refined*, that inſtruction calculated for the uſe of a family, or bearing any ſuch name, carries with it the air of fanaticiſm: But we cannot be too often reminded of the condition of thoſe who conſtitute the bulk of mankind; nor that the Almighty hath been pleaſed in a particular manner, to warn ſuch whom his providence places in the higheſt ſtations, to *conſider* the poor as the more immediate objects of *his paternal care*. We are not born for ourſelves only: If the *poor* are to perform the drudgery of life, the *rich* have the *Neceſſity of ſhewing a religious example.*

weightier charge of guarding them from their propenſities to evil, that they may preſerve the dignity of their nature, and ſupport the common hope of happineſs upon true and permanent principles; and thus ally the race of mankind by the ſtrongeſt contract of one common intereſt; the greateſt object of it being the immortality of the ſoul.

Whatever pretenſions *men* may make to a ſuperior degree of knowledge in the government of a *ſtate*, *women* have a large ſhare in the direction and management of *families*, which compoſe kingdoms; and they are, by univerſal conſent, moſt in their province when they are moſt attentive to the neceſſary affairs under their roof; and I hope they will think themſelves more particularly intereſted in theſe pages, and not the leſs, from the perſon who is the chief object of the inſtruction being of the ſame ſex. I do not preſume to direct them; I think they have the *advantage* whenever they pleaſe to uſe it: but I ſee with ſorrow that the parade and refinements of life have rendered us ſo extremely deficient in keeping our families in the fear of God, that many act as if this was below the conſideration of people of fortune and character.

The duty of attention to ſervants.

This is a *grievance* indeed, but of whom are we to complain? Whilſt one part is *deeply* buſied in various occupations, and the other eagerly bent on the purſuits of amuſement, the inattention which is ſhewn, even to our *children*, muſt be great, and much greater will it be to the intereſt and welfare of inferiors, deſtined to the humble offices of ſociety. Yet in this we act againſt our temporal advantage, for it is obvious that the welfare of our *ſervants* and our own, is ſo interwoven as to make it impoſſible to ſeparate them: A faithful and good ſervant, of either ſex, is a bleſſing wherever they are found, and equally valuable to the great and opulent, as to the lower ranks of the people: But our general practice is ſo *careleſsly* unmanly, and ſo unlike *chriſtians*, it ſeems as if this tye of human ſociety were diſſolved.

If ſervants do *not* learn their duty under the eye of their parents, they are now ſeldom in a way of ever learning it: and the end of their learning cannot be anſwered without *practice*. By the power of their own reaſon, and the *fatal*

effects

effects of evil conduct, ſome of them will diſcover their misfortune in not having been properly inſtructed; but it may not be ſo eaſy to extricate themſelves out of the difficulties in which they are involved. Servants, like other people, not habituated to remember their *Creator* in the days of their youth, will hardly ever remember him: And what is the effect of their *forgetting* him, but *vice* and *infidelity*, *mutual diſguſt between maſter and ſervant*, *perpetual change of domeſtics*, and a ſtate of unhappineſs on both ſides. This is ſo much the caſe in *private* life, amongſt all conditions of people, that we may juſtly conſider it as a *national misfortune*.

The maſter being veſted with authority in the government of his own houſe, is certainly accountable to God and his country. If the favour and regard he may ſhew, and the reports he may make of the domeſtics who have ſerved him, determine their fortune in any conſiderable degree, they muſt be conſidered as depending on him; and a great part of the evil complained of muſt ariſe from his *careleſſneſs and irreligion*.

I know not how far differences in religious opinions may have weakened the efficacy of religion itſelf in the conduct of life; nor whether we ſhould have more *true* piety if we had fewer modes of faith and worſhip: but I believe that when the heart is ſincere, the Almighty is not diſpleaſed with the varied offering of praiſe preſented to him. People of narrow minds do not eaſily bring themſelves to be entirely reconciled to thoſe who differ with them in religious opinions; but the eſſential difference is in the practice, not in the belief of mankind. We uſually prefer domeſtics of the ſame perſuaſion as ourſelves; and this may prevent ſome *inconveniences*, but it doth not ſtrike at the root of the evil we complain of.

We often find that the opinion of our domeſtics being what we vulgarly call 'not troubled with much religion,' is made a reaſon for indifference whether they really have any, and this rule of judging operates to render them as indifferent in regard to themſelves. Inſtead of that liberality of ſentiment which leads us to compaſſionate what we do not approve, and to ſuffer that which we cannot correct, we

ſuppoſe that we have no influence; and by a ſtrange defection from the true principles of policy, as well as chriſtian philoſophy, we grow negligent and offend againſt the benevolence and charity which is ſo eminently due to perſons under our own roof.

Condition of ſervants and domeſtics.

The great maſs of mankind may be comprehended under the denomination of maſter and ſervant, and their duties with regard to themſelves and the community at large, conſtitute a conſiderable part of the harmony of life.—It is the firſt object of internal policy, and a capital duty, equally eſſential to religion and humanity, to teach our inferiors the art of contentment; and to point out to them the bright rewards of honeſty and virtue in a life to come. Without this, they never can be rendered truly comfortable to themſelves, truly faithful to thoſe whom they ſerve, or ſincere towards their Maker. Theſe are objects of great moment; and happy it is when we can make an impreſſion on their minds.

All orders of men, according to the neceſſities of the condition in which the Author of Nature hath placed them, muſt attend to the things of this world; but *religion* is ſtill the object, which if they regard with zeal and ſincerity, the reſt will be added: It is therefore from a defect in our faith, as well as our want of reſolution, that we ſee ſo much negligence prevail amongſt us.

The great Author of Nature certainly intended the happineſs of *all* his creatures: and we are all born to labour as we are to trouble: this is the condition of human life; but ſervants being moſt freed from temptations to vanity, and conſequently having feweſt paſſions to gratify, may paſs through life with as much ſatisfaction, as the generality of ſuch as are born to large fortunes. Thoſe who are bred to labour may, for the ſame reaſon, be taught the fear of God, and kept in it with as little difficulty as the children of the opulent.

With regard to the quality of our domeſtics, they are generally taken from among that part of our fellow-ſubjects, whoſe only property is their ability for labour: ſome who ſerve the wealthy are much advanced in condition; whilſt

others

others have reaſon to wiſh to re-viſit their native fields, live more regular lives, and more free from temptation. Though it is generally deemed the *intereſt of a commercial nation* to train up the people, as nearly as poſſible, in their proper rank; yet, happy in our glorious conſtitution, we give all their juſt inheritance of liberty, to do the beſt they can for themſelves, according to their intellectual endowments, and the providential advantages they may enjoy. Thoſe who deſcend from parents who earn their bread by manual labour, generally become habituated to the ſame kind of life, and enjoy as much freedom as they need wiſh for; but the due care of them depends more on the piety, judgment, and humanity of the maſter and miſtreſs, and the *cuſtoms* which prevail, than upon the *laws* of the land.

Condition of female ſervants, wheregood example is wanting.

With regard to *female domeſtics*, in particular, it is eaſy to perceive how much the calm ſucceſſion of a lady's hours depends on the good humour and reſpect ſhewn her by her ſervants. But there muſt be fidelity alſo, ſupported by religion, before ſhe can pronounce herſelf a happy woman.

As to the lawleſs commerce of the ſexes, what can be ſaid when the duties of hoſpitality are violated by the arts and devices of thoſe, whoſe ardour of youth, or inſolence of fortune, ſet divine and human laws at defiance! If inſtead of guarding the indigent, whoſe only dowry is their *virtue* and *ability* to labour, men triumph over the ſpoils of innocence, and devote to infamy thoſe very beings they are bound by every ſocial law, and every ſacred precept, to aſſiſt and protect, they muſt anſwer for it at the *judgment-ſeat*.

With reſpect to the compariſon of the *rich and the poor*, it may be preſumed that ſhe who hath the feweſt temptations to depart from the heavenly law, will be the leaſt ſubject to neglect her duty. The full enjoyment of a plentiful fortune exempts from all temptation ariſing from *want*; and it follows, that where motives of ſhame, intereſt, or worldly glory operate leaſt, there virtue is entitled to the moſt aſſiſtance.

To keep aloof from danger, and not to indulge any prelude to guilt, has ever been one of the firſt leſſons in the

ſchools

ſchools of religion and philoſophy: And not to conſider the difficulty of making a compenſation for injuſtice, committed by ſeduction, is as injurious to a man's honour, as not regarding the guilt, is a violence on his *religion*. To behold a partner in iniquity, plunged into the gulph of proſtitution, exhibits a picture of diſtreſs, at which humanity ſhudders, and againſt which every generous ſentiment of the heart revolts.

Force of induſtry. In all arguments of this ſort, we have generally recourſe to the doctrine of induſtry, as the beſt guardian of innocence, and the trueſt friend of happineſs; and it is very obvious, That a ſteady truſt in the providence of God, joined to a habit of praying to him, to crown induſtry, will naturally produce ſuch comfort and intrepidity, as take out the ſting of poverty; and by rendering labour ſweet, put the induſtrious on a level of happineſs with the opulent. It is of no leſs uſe to obtain the comforts of life, than to prevent the miſeries to which it is ſubject, whilſt the contrary often proves a temptation to tranſgreſſions. The language to ſervants, and perhaps to mankind in general, ſhould therefore be, according to the apothegm, *Labour that thou be not idle, for idleneſs teacheth much evil*; and it is as true that we may date the deſtruction of millions from the real want of employment, or the neglect of it: But induſtry muſt be ſupported by piety, leſt our activity ſhould be employed in doing miſchief.

Generoſity towards the female world. True generoſity is the ſame, whether diſplayed towards the poor or the rich. The pomp and parade of life may dazzle vulgar eyes; but they make no difference with reſpect to the dignity and rights of human nature, and the purity of the ſoul. There are no marks or characters ſtampt on the mind, ſtronger than the affections which lead us to ſhew favour to the innocent: but innocency in *females*, and ſuch as are expoſed to danger from their youth and perſonal charms, has always been the ſubject of the moſt *heroic virtue*; men have generally been eager to hazard life in defence of it, not in *romantic* exploits only, but in *ſober* conduct: Where any ſpark of genuine gallantry has fired the breaſt, the utmoſt readineſs has been

always

always ſhewn to *deſpiſe danger* on ſuch occaſions: Perhaps this hath not been often exerciſed towards the poor and humble; but in the ſight of heaven, it appears with ſo much the brighter luſtre, as it is diveſted of the homage we uſually pay to riches and worldly honours.

Nor ought we to forget that there is an elegancy in the mode of performing duties of piety and compaſſion. Which of the ſexes has the ſtrongeſt incentives to the generoſity I am recommending I cannot ſay; but I think no lady can appear in a point of view more charming, than being diveſted of that *inſolence of levity* which tempts ſo many to look down on others, ſhe ſhews a maternal care of young female ſervants. The protection of one, who from her inexperience and poverty is moſt expoſed to danger, adds honour and dignity to the moſt accompliſhed character: This diſpoſition exalts and refines and warms the moſt ſluggiſh and inanimate temper! This pleads their cauſe with all the eloquence of *truth*, and all the tenderneſs of the *pureſt* affection; and we ought to conſider it as the choiceſt gem in the diadem of virtue.

Whether it be in the huſbandman who ploughs the field, or the prince that rules the land, humanity and religion can never ſhine brighter than when applied to the glorious purpoſes of preſerving our fellow-creatures from the ſtains of iniquity: and in every view there is a reverential homage due to *Providence*, in behalf of thoſe who have no other dowry than their *innocence*.

Force of example in general.

There is at this period more worldly ſagacity among the lower claſſes of the people, than is generally ſuppoſed: But if thoſe, who we diſtinguiſh by the name of the *great*, do not take the lead in ſuch a reformation of *manners*, as experience proves to be eſſential to our happineſs, who is to take it? They who expect it to come firſt from the *illiterate*, deſerve no better name themſelves. Nothing can be more honourable among men, than a *good example*; and if the world were ſo conſtituted, that no one could enter the temple of honour but as he paſſed through that of *virtue*, we might hope to ſee things wear a brighter aſpect.

All

All that is truly great muſt ariſe from *virtue*; for what can *vice* do more, when ſupported by a large fortune, than make herſelf brilliant, to dazzle the eyes of the beholder, and through the magic glaſs of grandeur, appear pleaſing and amiable? The more ſhe conceals her deformity from her deluded votaries, the more ſhe may flatter them with the hopes of happineſs, by means of the gratifications which ſhe can give: And it is not to be imagined, that the bulk of mankind will conſider ſo much, that he who acts his part *beſt*, is the moſt acceptable in the ſight of God, as who is in the beſt ſituation of *indulging his paſſions*.

The moſt ignorant naturally *look up* for example: the common people will be what their *ſuperiors* are; and they often become more dangerous in *vice*, as they are leſs civilized in *manners*. *Precepts* are not ſo much wanted by them as *patterns*, and good example commands with a force which in the iſſue will predominate. It is not vague harangues or ſmooth-flowing periods, as if the poſſeſſion of virtue were to be acquired by the power of words!—The truths which common ſenſe dictates, are level to all; they are eaſy to comprehend; and *virtue* is always ready to receive thoſe who devote themſelves to her.

People in the middle *ſtations of life*, have no leſs influence on their inferiors, and particularly their domeſtics: and if we conſider the diſadvantages which their ſervants labour under for want of inſtruction, the prevalency of bad example muſt be equally fatal to them. But I fear there are ſome who do not think of this matter; and many who deny that any ſuch obligation exiſts. Even the more aged and phlegmatic, from whom one might expect the moſt ſerious attention, often miſtake the weakneſs and prejudices of their minds, for a ſuperior degree of underſtanding; and reaſon themſelves into an opinion, that a cloſe attention to the religious conduct of their ſervants, or the lower claſſes of mankind, is fit *only* for the cognizance of the *parochial prieſt* in the beaten road of duty; and from this falſe principle, the concluſion is natural: they give themſelves no trouble or concern, except that they continually complain of the worthleſſneſs of *their ſervants*, without caſting back a ſingle

thought on *their own*. This militates againſt virtue like a two-edged ſword; the maſter and ſervant grow equally negligent of their duty to *God* and *each other*: *Filial* and *parental* duties have oftentimes no better fortune, and we all experience the bad effects of careleſſneſs and indifference!

SECT. II.

Danger of forced celibacy.

IT is hardly poſſible to conſider the *moral*, without entering into the *political* ſtate of our fellow-ſubjects. That the *wealth and power* of a country conſiſts in its *numbers* of working people, is beyond diſpute—that *defence in war* depends on the ſame cauſe, cannot be denied:—that the rights of mankind, as they regard the paſſions and appetites, controulable by laws, are equal, is obvious; ſhall we then, as it were in contempt of theſe principles, make *cuſtom* our law; and from notions of *private* convenience beat down the boundaries of public policy, and break the ſtrongeſt ties of humanity? Yet this is demonſtrable in the *forced* celibacy of our *domeſtics*, inſomuch that they are obliged to practice every ſiniſter art and contrivance to conceal their ſituation when they are married.

Thus, whilſt we deſpiſe the *papiſts*, in regard to their *convents* and *nunneries*, we make every private houſe a convent and a nunnery. Very few people will take ſervants who are married; for that which ſhould be their honour is made their diſgrace. Is this the *intereſt* of a commercial ſtate, poſſeſſing wide extended dominions, and depending upon ſtrength to maintain them? Can ſuch conduct proceed from genuine notions of freedom? Does the batchelor, in his promiſcuous commerce, give any earneſt of fidelity to the ſtate? Does he even concern himſelf about the exiſtence of his country? A diſſoluteneſs of manners, with regard to the lawleſs commerce of the ſexes, operates to the deſtruction of a community; while the *married man* gives a ſecurity to the public, that he will be faithful to it; his love for his *wife* and

 children

children being a depoſit for his fidelity. What a reproach it is, to hear of ſubjects *(a)* far inferior to ourſelves in plenty, freedom, ſcience, and every other mark of national glory, exceed us greatly in this kind of policy and humanity!

Draught of people from the counties to London.

We drain off from agriculture and manufactory near 5000 people annually: this, by proper attention to the poor of theſe cities, might be prevented, for vice and careleſſneſs kill vaſt numbers every year *(b)*.

Inconveniencies of the marriage act.

As the marriage act now ſtands, it is apparently calculated to promote ſobriety, and might operate advantageouſly among a ſober and diſciplined people;

(a) In *Tuſcany*, it is computed that in 650,000 marriageable men and women, 280,000 turn'd of the age of *twenty*, are actually married, which is very near *two* married people to *three* ſingle; and yet about three in an hundred of their whole number of people are in a ſtate of celibacy, from motives of ſuperſtition.

In computing *two ſeventhſ* more people in *London* and *Weſtminſter* than there are in *Paris*, (which, notwithſtanding the boaſts of the *French* I take to be the caſe) our number of *births* ſhould be 24,000, whereas our *chriſtenings* are ſeldom above 16,000; and our burials ſeldom ſhort of 22,000; and whatever we may judge of the defects of our *bills of mortality*, real experience correſponds with the evidence which theſe produce, that theſe cities drain the country.

This is not at all wonderful, if we conſider, that if 1 in 13 is a *domeſtic* or *ſervant* of ſome kind or other, there are 25,000 pairs, of whom if we may be allowed to reckon 15,000 pairs from 20 to 40 years of age, and fairly compute that 10,000 ſuch pairs are in a ſtate of celibacy, we may well complain of a want of people. What the effect is to *their own morals*, and how injurious to the *ſtate*, is more eaſy to conceive than deſcribe. I am afraid the caſe is nearly the ſame in other great towns and cities in theſe kingdoms, in proportion as vice and exceſs prevail among the inhabitants.

(b) *Theſe* cities only have occaſion for at leaſt 5000 people annually from the country; ſome for domeſtic ſervice, and ſome to go abroad; and full this number dies here, more than are born: The devaſtation of infants is ſo prodigious, that near 60 *per cent.* of the number born die under *five* years of age. This drain is ſo far injurious to the cultiv-tion of the earth, and manufactories, that the quantity of the neceſſaries

people; but it ſeems to have a quite contrary effect with us, and militates againſt population: I have reaſon to believe that many *intended marriages* fail by the delay created by the law, the parties under the ſanction of mutual promiſes, or frequently by mere delay, come together before the ceremony: the conſequence of which is, that the *hind*, who is generally the moſt of a mere animal, or the leaſt ſenſible of moral obligations, often fails of his promiſe. If the *girl* does not prove with child, the laws ſeldom take any cognizance; and ſecreſy being ſeldom obſerved in theſe caſes, this deluded young woman takes up the *trade of lawleſs love*. Being no longer on a level with thoſe who have a ſenſe of ſhame, ſhe becomes a *proſtitute*, and the neighbouring youth are frequently debauched by her, and diverted from marriage.

Thus one evil generates many others; and this is a further reaſon why our numbers in general *diminiſh*, or that they do not *increaſe* in a due proportion, to anſwer the drain of people for *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *America*.

Advantages of regular general inoculation.

Another circumſtance neceſſary to be mentioned is inoculation, from which we do not draw all the advantage we might, by encouraging the practice of it among the *labouring* part of our fellow-ſubjects, but particularly the poor of theſe cities *(a)*. Inoculation is now become ſo familiar and ſafe, that if it was properly

ceſſaries of life, and the ability for defence in war, muſt be ſo much the leſs. No ſupply of people is ſent from hence to fill up the vacancy made by this drain, unleſs it be a *few parochial infant poor*.

(a) Servants are generally queſtioned on the article of the ſmall-pox, but it might be a ſalutary rule never to admit of any ſervant or apprentice into a family, unleſs they have had this diſtemper; or that they can produce a certificate of having been *inoculated* without effect. I reckon 1 in 14 whom this diſeaſe never reaches, and there is no inconſiderable number on whom inoculation will not take effect. If a certificate were required of their having actually had the diſeaſe, or been inoculated without its taking effect, it would put the thing beyond doubt.

In theſe cities, the danger is ſo great, that 2000 in the number of 24,000 die annually of this diſeaſe, although hardly *three* in a thouſand die when inoculated.

perly conducted in these cities, we should not see such a devastation of human life created by the small-pox.

As

Supposing *London* and *Westminster*, and their dependancies, to contain people ——— 700,000

Deduct one *fourteenth* part for such as never take the small-pox 50,000

Remain ——— 650,000

Deduct from this number 6 parts in 7 who have had the small-pox ——— 557,143

Remain ——— 92,857

Of these it is computed (exclusive of inoculation) that those who have the small-pox annually, amount to ——— 26,000

Now if 1 in 7 die (and of the poorer part, the proportion runs as high as 1 in 5) it amounts to ——— 2285

On a *medium* for many years past, since the establishment of inoculation, this is near the *real number* who have gone off the stage by the *small-pox*, notwithstanding that, when properly introduced, and the infection guarded against, it is really *harmless*.

From hence it follows that there is a capital error in not inoculating, and probably by infection being communicated for want of precaution. If practitioners are more concerned about their *gain*, by those whom they inoculate, than for the preservation of their fellow-subjects, whom they do not inoculate, we may conclude that no attempt will be made *by them*, to trace out the *cause* of so grievous a mortality. We all know the extreme subtilty of the infection of this disease; and that this is not weakened by the familiar practice of inoculation. If *infection* is communicated to numbers by carelessness in practice, we may trace out how it happens that as many now die of the small-pox in these cities, as in former times. Inoculation is become so glorious a *preventive remedy*, we are bound in gratitude to Providence, as well as *prudence*, to strive against its becoming dangerous by our *carelessness*. The poor in the metropolis are very *thoughtless*, and therefore others should think for them.

If, as I have observed, it were deemed a qualification for *apprenticeship* to have had the small-pox, or to have been inoculated:

If the same were in use, as to *servants* of all kinds:

If *private inoculating houses* for the reception of patients (now found in our streets without distinction) were confined to particular spots, and put under the direction of the civil magistrate:

If some restraints were laid on *private families*, during the inoculation of any person in the house:

If the parochial officers were obliged to send all their poor, not having

ing

As to the *diſeaſe created by vice*, the number carried off is ſtill more conſiderable; and the inſtances too ſhocking to enumerate. Thoſe who offer polluted incenſe to their appetites, unmindful of the fate of the object of their deſire, plunge many young females into ſo vitiated and abandoned a courſe, that they become careleſs of what miſchief they do to others, or what becomes of themſelves: neither party regarding the miſery and early death, which they are the *immediate* occaſion of to themſelves, cannot be ſuppoſed to have much regard to *poſterity*. This is an evil common to moſt great cities in Europe, but it is no where ſo indecently criminal. Our charitable inſtitutions are numerous, but our hoſpitals are not large enough, nor their funds equal to the relief of the miſeries created by proſtitution, as I have often ſeen.

Devaſtation created by the foul diſeaſe.

Conſidering the devaſtation occaſioned by the effects of this vice, every one who pretends to patriotiſm, ſhould be forward in recommending the *conjugal* alliance, and reject the *bought ſmiles* of *harlots*, and the dangers which attend *their* paths.

But of the many capital inconveniencies to which we have ſervilely ſubmitted, the practice of deſtroying the infant pariſh

ing had the ſmall-pox, to be inoculated, and reject all thoſe who will not conſent to ſo reaſonable a propoſition for their own and the *common ſafety*:

If practitioners were under ſome *public regulations*:

If ſuch meaſures were adopted, the *remedy* could not be ſo bad as the *diſeaſe*; and a conſiderable part of thoſe who now find an untimely grave, might be ſaved to the community.

This ſeems to be an object of parliamentary enquiry, as it is certain in the nature of things, that the evil may be in a great degree remedied, by a *more general encouragement to inoculation, and eſtabliſhed rules of caution in the conduct of the operation*. The inoculating hoſpital is now chiefly employed in behalf of *country people*, in conſequence of recommendations from the governors.

The pariſh-officers in *London*, though they have authority, do not uſually inoculate their *poor*, notwithſtanding that workhouſes are always the moſt ſubject to render the diſeaſe the more virulent, if it comes in the natural way; ſo that with reſpect to our poor in theſe great cities, this bleſſing of inoculation is much neglected.

Vaſt loſs created by the neglect of the infant pariſh poor.

pariſh poor of theſe cities, ſtood moſt diſtinguiſhed in the annals of *impolicy*. It is but the other day they had a general deliverance out of the jaws of death. Unable to utter their complaint, or relate their ſhocking tale, they had been ſlaughtered by *legal murder!* I call it *legal murder*, when the laws ſlept over their cries: They were ſent to the grave under circumſtances of ſuch cruelty, as rendered their death but a ſmall remove from the hand of violence *(a)*. How long the evil had prevailed, I know not; it was much complained of in 1688. It was reſerved for his preſent Majeſty, by an act of the 7th year of his reign, to introduce the reign of policy, humanity, and religion *(b)*.

Benefits of the Act of the 7th of his preſent Majeſty.

Defects in our poor's laws, operating againſt population.

Our poor's laws are in ſome reſpects defective, but they might be eaſily rectified, and the community preſerved from the inconveniences which would probably attend the abolition of the plan in general. The old act is defective as

(a) The mortality of infants in pariſh work-houſes was ſo great, *i. e.* in the bills of mortality, to give an idea of it, I need only mention, that 62 illegitimate children (which are generally as ſtrong as others) brought into one work-houſe ſo recently as 1763, before 1764 was ended, every one of them was dead.

(b) The act of the 7th of his preſent Majeſty for the better preſervation of the infant poor, requires,

That all infants be ſent to nurſe into the country (meaning to be removed from the poiſonous air of a work-houſe) at leaſt 3 miles diſtant:

That they remain in the country till they are at leaſt 6 years old:

That at leaſt 2 s. 6 d. be paid a week for the nurſing, beſides the clothes and other neceſſaries——

That every nurſe having reared a child to the age of twelve months, ſhall be paid a gratuity or reward of *ten ſhillings*:

That the execution of this law, and theſe regulations, ſhall be under the inſpection of five noblemen or gentlemen, the moſt reſpectable in the pariſh, to be choſen triennially——

This law confirms the former act of 1762, providing for a *regular uniform regiſter of the children*; and now extended from their birth or admittance, under the care of the pariſh, to their being diſcharged, or placed

as to the age (a) at which the children are to be placed out, *viz.* That they ſhall ſerve till they are twenty-four. This evil is rectified as far as the act of the 7th of his preſent Majeſty extends, for the time is limited to twenty-one years in the capital pariſhes in the bills of mortality: But if we mean to promote marriage, and render life more pleaſing to the poor, we ſhould extend this law over the kingdom:

Defects in the parochial law, in regard to the time of apprenticeſhip.

When

placed out apprentice.—And the company of pariſh-clerks prints an *Abſtract* of the account. This abſtract ſhould be publiſhed and ſold at a low price, that all the world may ſee how a buſineſs of ſo delicate a nature is conducted.

(a) The placing out *pariſh children* to labouring or common mechanical buſineſſes to the age of 24, according to the 43 *Eliz.* is become moſt abſurd, and inconſiſtent: it is the cauſe of few ſuch apprentices ſerving out their time; it creates many domeſtic broils, and prevents many marriages.

In the appointment of overſeers of the poor, the old law is alſo deficient: half the number ſhould be gentlemen of the greateſt property; and in caſe of failure in this duty, they ſhould be fined. At leaſt *one* of the *four* ſhould ſerve *two years* ſucceſſively, that the experience gained may be continued from year to year in perpetual ſucceſſion.

The abſurdity of parochial certificates is alſo glaring: if a man can get his bread in one place, why ſhould he be obliged to go to another, under the apprehenſion that he or his children may become a charge to the pariſh. If he can get his bread, his children can do the ſame; it will ſtill be *diſtributive juſtice* to permit them to remain where they are; for they will be obliged by hunger to remove, or apply themſelves to ſome means of a ſupport; but in our ſtate of *freedom* to harraſs the poor, and drive them from their hut, is a ſtrange inconſiſtency. If no pariſh could return a child to the place of the nativity of the father, no claim could be made on any ſuch account, and *litigations* would ceaſe.

Where there is employment, there will the indigent generally migrate; but there might be employment in all places where there are people; and if the poor enjoy ſufficient ſpace to work in, and have ſweet air to breathe, and good water to drink; if their hands are inured from five or ſix years of age to ſpinning, knitting, and ſewing, they will be covered with decent apparel, and be nouriſhed with ſufficient food, without becoming a burthen.

But

Wherein inclosures are hurtful to population.

When waſte lands of private property will admit of incloſures, there ought durable and commodious cottages to be erected, with ſuch other little appendages, as may occur to the mind of the benefactor; for it cannot be in the nature of things that men will grow like corn without covering; and the parent muſt enjoy a degree of comfort, or the law of ſelf-preſervation will tempt him to leave his children to be provided for by the pariſh.

Complaints againſt incloſures, not diſtinguiſhing how the breed of men might be cultivated as well as the growth of corn, ſeem to be abſurd. If there was a general obligation to incloſe *all* the lands, and a premium given for it, the ſtate would be much benefited *(a)*. We muſt increaſe or diminiſh in numbers: we can hardly ſtand at any point, and we ſhall certainly diminiſh, if people of property in land do

But ſuppoſing the *quality* of the food provided for the poor were mended in proportion to the aggregate ſum of their gain, be the number relieved great or ſmall, it will become the intereſt of every one to ſee the other work; but there muſt be ſome perſon of liberal ſentiments to make the work proſper. The firſt conſideration ſhould be to render the children acceptable in ſervitude, that they may be got the earlier into life. This may be done by the reputation of good order and diſcipline. And as to manual labour, what will ſo effectually promote this end as knitting for boys in their childhood, and for thoſe in the country *hoeing*, and ſewing and knitting for girls. Theſe are qualities they may always carry with them: *Spinning* may be moſt profitable when they are likely to be confined to the ſpot; and therefore let them learn alſo to ſpin. Other works may do for adults, but not ſo well for children.

(a) This would operate to the increaſe of the number of inhabitants in the ſame proportion as there was work cut out for more people; but the monopolizing of farms has a quite oppoſite effect. In ſuch a caſe we ſhould encourage people to come to the ſpot where the labour requires them, by ſome additional motives beyond the mere proſpect of employment. A man muſt live in a houſe; he cannot live in the open air; and the more comfortable it is made, the more he will rejoice. Therefore it is very obvious, that one method of increaſing the number of people, is by a more general encouragement to incloſure; provided we attend at the ſame time to the welfare of the labouring part of mankind.

do not apply a portion of their thoughts to the cultivation of their own ſpecies, in which the national riches and defence chiefly conſiſts. Wealth without people, is like air without food; and as *famine*, in its operations, breeds *peſtilence*, want of people produces *poverty:* our drains for diſtant dominions are conſiderations of the moſt ſerious nature, and ought to inſpire us all with a deſire of promoting every conſiſtent mode of population.

Monopolizing of farms injurious to population

If the farms which are now put into few hands were again divided into many, liberty, plenty, and defence, would be the better ſecured; for notwithſtanding the uniting a number of farms into one, may render the cultivation leſs expenſive, and conſequently the produce cheaper; yet if this practice operates to the decreaſe of the number of the people, or to the increaſe of the poor, we ſhall be no gainers in the iſſue:—— If it prevents marriages; if it drives people into great towns, where they become more debauched, or die at an earlier age, or leave no progeny, we muſt ſuffer in our political oeconomy. Theſe are evils which grow from *improvement*, but more from the landlord living ſo great a part of his time abſent from home, and not attending properly to the *liberty* of his country. The greater the riches thrown into one ſcale, the greater poverty will be in the other: and there is an *equilibrium* eſſential to freedom, which conſiſts in cheriſhing the middle and lower ranks; for otherwiſe the inſolence of wealth on one ſide, and the *diſſoluteneſs* and ſervile ſubmiſſion of the indigent on the other, muſt operate againſt liberty. If we mean to have a great number of labouring people, we muſt furniſh employment for them; and what employment can be ſo uſeful as *tilling the earth.*

In regard to plenty, it is remarked, that farmers of the inferior claſs attend to minute articles of proviſion as well as grain, whereas great ones think of grain only.—Whether the former improve lands ſo much, is a queſtion determinable only by the tenure of leaſes, and the quality and ability of the men to whom the land is let; but it proves nothing, for a great tenant may wear out land, if he is not reſtrained: whereas the argument for employing few hands may be ex-

tended ſo far, as will operate to the decreaſe of our numbers, and to the conſumption whereby the ſtate is ſupported.

From hence it is probable, whatever ambiguities may attend this propoſition, we ſhall be obliged to change our plan, and employ *more farmers*; and with incloſures, provide alſo a proportionate number of cottages for the growth of the *human ſpecies*, well knowing that they cannot exiſt under the bare canopy of the heavens: And we ſhould contrive that they may enjoy pure air under their roof, however ſcanty their other enjoyments may be.

Horſes for parade deſtructive to population.

I alſo imagine that the time is not far diſtant when we ſhall attend more to the growth of *men*, and leſs to that of horſes, particularly ſuch horſes as are merely for *parade*, or *exportation*: the ſame conſumption of the land might be made, and much greater wealth acquired, if we had more rational animals for uſe, and fewer brutes for amuſement *(a)*.

SECT. III.

Complaints inſeparable from human life.

BUT it is not ſo great a part of my preſent purpoſe to conſider what our political complaints may be, as how to improve in moral and divine philoſophy, and how to counteract the influence of bad example: This is become the more neceſſary from

(a) It ſhould be conſidered how much a man pays in taxes on his labour and conſumption; and that he is worth, for his labour, from the age of 15 to 38, full 200 l. whereas horſes generally ſell for 15 l. to 60 l. likewiſe that the ſame quantity of land, the produce of which carries a horſe to five years old, will carry a man to *fifteen* or *twenty*; and that the more food is conſumed by horſes, the higher the price of the neceſſaries of life will be to men. Perhaps the defects of our preſent plan will not be rectified till we ſhall be compelled to engage in a war, and find a want of *men*. If in the mean time our oriental atchievements operate as a continual war; and the drain of people for *America* ſhould have the ſame effect, ſuch changes in our circumſtances, from former times, muſt render a more peculiar attention neceſſary to the growth of the human ſpecies.

from the conſideration, that no age was ever ſo diſtinguiſhed for the love of pleaſure and diſſipation. There ever will be a repugnance to the auſtere duties of life, among all ranks of people; but it will increaſe in proportion as the love of pleaſure predominates, and this love grows with enjoyment. While ſo many public places of reſort for the purpoſe of diſſipation are found, it will be difficult for our youth *in theſe cities*, which give the faſhion over the nation, to collect their ſcattered thoughts, and apply them to ſerious things. Places of entertainment are multiplied ſo exceedingly, and ſome amuſements revived, which had far better have remained in oblivion, it is hard to ſay what the end will be. But of all theſe laboured contrivances, none are ſo well calculated to indulge a propenſity to vice as maſquerades!—How many things are ſaid and liſtened to, under a diſguiſe, which would otherwiſe bluſhen the face of impudence! A nation, ſuch as ours, ſhould leave this diverſion to people whoſe ſenſe and knowledge riſe no higher.

Whatever our *political* ſtate and circumſtances may be, the common ſenſe and voice of mankind can hardly deceive us; and all thinking perſons who have gone before us into an *eternal* ſtate, have left this great obſervation behind them, that ſooner or later they have felt in their own breaſt, the teſtimony God hath given, which has one day made them *ſerious*, either by the inexpreſſible fears and agonies of a troubled mind, or the inconceivable peace and joy of a good conſcience!——Therefore whether our meaſures relate more immediately to the maſter, or the ſervant, all our thoughts and external circumſtances have as ſtrong a relation to *religion*, as *man* to *immortality*. With reſpect to this world, we ſee things paſs in a rapid motion before our eyes, and the place thereof known no more: Whilſt the pleaſures we enjoy, or the pains we ſuffer, are abſorbed in the daily triumphs of mortality which demand of us to take advantage of every event. The *beſt* can only ſet their *good* and uſeful thoughts as a counterbalance to the *evil* of their hearts; as good actions are placed againſt bad ones, ſtill referring our cauſe to the mercies of heaven.

Though *virtue* is awful and majeſtic, ſhe cannot be ſaid to appear in character, but as ſhe acts with gentleneſs and perſuaſion: To inſult the weakneſs of human nature, is rather the part of an infernal than a beatified ſpirit: but as dying in the cauſe of *virtue* is glorious, to live in her ſervice, though in the ſilent retreats of rural life, cannot be leſs acceptable to the tender parent of mankind.

In this view I have communicated my thoughts, preſuming that the mode which I have adopted, in the familiar ſtrain of converſation, may be uſeful: my intention is, that my book ſhall be as a library to thoſe, whoſe taſte or pecuniary ability extend no further; and that it ſhould rather excite the curioſity of my reader than frighten him with ſevere exactions of heart-piercing penitence and rigorous diſcipline; yet not forgetting that ſincere ſorrow for ſin, and ſelf-denial, are abſolutely eſſential to the religion of Chriſt.

The chief characters of my *drama* are drawn with a view to exalt the *humble*, yet not to contemn the proud. I have ſuppoſed that truth and honour, generoſity and piety may inhabit the breaſt of one in a low condition. I eſpouſe the cauſe of a father who is truly parental; and of his daughter in her genuine purity and ſimplicity of manners. The age and experience of one, are ſet as a counterpoiſe to the youth and ignorance of the other, and together compoſe that harmony which conſtitutes true ſocial intercourſe of the moſt worthy and beneficial kind. I hope very little of my book will be found *too high* for inferior perſons, who have any true notion of the chriſtian religion; or too low for people of ſuperior condition. If ſome of the thoughts are as old as the creation, they will be *new* to many youthful readers, and *virtue* is always blooming, time makes no change to render her charms the leſs attractive.

My deſcriptions, whether taken from the manners of the living, or the behaviour of thoſe who are gone before us, are not exaggerated, but given ſimply as truth and obſervation guided my pen. Whatever we attempt, we ſhould ſtrive to do juſtice to all that is truly valuable in life; and if the *farmer* proves himſelf to be a *moral philoſopher*, who has cultivat-

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ed his *heart* as well as his *fields*, he has a right to enjoy the fruits of his labours, and to have his hoary temples crowned with honour!

I am ſenſible how ſubject a work of this kind is to be treated as an ebullition of pious zeal: nor ſhould I be ſurprized to hear it ſaid by a female acquaintance, perhaps in moſt reſpects highly valuable, "Lord! what *good* will you do, by taking ſo much pains to build this *monſtrous pile* of piety?" My anſwer is, "Your *ladyſhip* will be beſt able to determine this queſtion, if you ſhould condeſcend to read what I have written; otherwiſe I can poſſibly do you no good: Your women ſervants may perhaps become the better for it, and *you* may reap ſome benefit from their virtues. If any one proves an *example* of piety, you will ſecretly bluſh, and amend your ways.—You will not be ſurprized that *I* ſhould *preach:* I am deſcending into the vale of years; *you* are going up the hill, to take a view of what I have often ſeen. Many a long day have I beheld the vanities of the world! Many of the faults of others are obvious to me;—and ſo are ſome of my own. Things wear a different aſpect in your eyes: *You* are in the *docile* period of life, and if I might preſume to talk the language of a philoſopher, I ſhould ſay it is probable you ſtand in *need of ſome correction*; but if this word is too harſh, I will call it *admonition*. If I now officiouſly intrude on your gayer hours, I remind you that it is not always *ſpring* nor *ſummer*. You wiſh in due time to reach the *winter* of your days; and what do you imagine will *then* contribute moſt to your comfort, and brighten your proſpect beyond the grave?——Do not ruffle the ſmoothneſs of your brow by any diſdainful look: You have my ſincereſt wiſhes that your hopes may always bloſſom in the fulleſt charms of vernal beauty, 'till in the great progreſs of human wiſdom, your paſſions being lulled to reſt, your enjoyments may become pure as the limpid ſtream, bright as the meridian ſun, and calm as a ſummer ſea. Some degree of ſorrow is the lot of every mortal: but I truſt that *your proſperity* will never be impaired by the want of virtue; nor your *adverſity* be devoid of conſolation. 'Ere long you muſt deliver up your *material* part, to be the

Reflections of a lady anſwered.

ſport of elements; but as nature, in her yearly courſe, reſtores the beauty of the *faireſt flowers*, though appearing irrevocably loſt, your frame being diſſolved will again unite with your angelic ſpirit: And may you *now* look up to heaven in ſuch humble purity and elevation of heart, as will render you acceptable to the great Lord of all, without whoſe favour there can be no happineſs in either world!"

Would ſuch an addreſs offend a lady, who has ſenſe enough to underſtand what the condition of life is, and what our hopes as chriſtians *ſhould be?*——Whether in high life or in low, here is nothing treaſonable in this againſt the charms of youth, or the power of beauty.

Allowing for the difference of education, I preſume the *maid* and the *miſtreſs* are much alike in their propenſities to *good* or *evil*. In general the ſervant who has virtue enough to love or reſpect her miſtreſs, will form her taſte accordingly; and if the *favourite book of the day* is not recommended to her, ſhe will ſteal the reading, and ſave ſome ſcraps of knowledge: if ſhe hath common underſtanding, ſhe will find ſomething to pleaſe her: if ſhe was ever taught the duties of religion, though the *remembrance* ſhould have been buried in the tomb of folly, yet will it riſe again from the grave and triumph over her negligence and diſſipation.

If the miſtreſs is unhappily a ſtranger to all books of a moral and religious tendency, there will be the leſs reaſon to expect any virtue from her ſervants; for though a *good* example does not always prevail, a *bad* one favours the corruption of the heart: and the Lord have mercy on thoſe who live within its baneful influence!

Power of virtue well recommended.

Whether *beauty* appears in its greateſt luſtre without any decoration, is a queſtion not fully decided; but it is evident, that *virtue* often paſſes unheeded for want of thoſe ornaments which for the moſt part attract the eyes of women. Elegancy is as compatible with ſimplicity, as politeneſs with humility: nor can the heart of man keep *time* with peace and concord, unleſs good manners and external decorum are preſerved. But without entering into a particular compariſon of the lady and her female ſervant, the ſuperior knowledge of the

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one muſt come in aid of the ignorance of the other: and we confeſs that diſcourſes on morality, and reflections on human nature, are the beſt means we can make uſe of, to improve our minds, and gain a true knowledge of ourſelves; and conſequently to recover our ſouls out of the vice, ignorance, and prejudice which naturally cleave to them. This being laid down as a truth, the next great object is to find a way to the heart, as well as the underſtanding of the reader; and if the young or aged are pleaſed with any of theſe pages, they may be ſure of being profited. The principal character has this ſimilitude with ſome of the heroes of antiquity, that he is employed in tilling the earth: if he ſpeaks like a philoſopher, we muſt conſider him as ſuch; and what is true greatneſs of mind, but acquaintance with the moſt important objects, and doing all the good poſſible, in our ſeveral ſtations, upon the beſt and nobleſt principles?

The doctrines here recommended are ſupported by chriſtians and philoſophers of the greateſt eminence, whoſe ſentiments may be read in the abſtract, without the labour of any deep inveſtigation; for I conſider common ſenſe and reaſon as more valuable than profound learning, and to guard againſt the engines of iniquity, which the evil ſpirit employs to work the deſtruction of mankind, of far greater moment than ability to ſolve the deepeſt problem. The glory of conquering *ſin* ſhould raiſe our thoughts above all other victories, and afford more ſolid joy than all the triumphs which attend the thrones of princes!

Humility eſſential to virtue.

But to confine ourſelves to ſober humble life, my plan of moral rectitude can hardly furniſh any idea of wordly grandeur, or give any falſe turn of mind to the humble in condition. The queſtion is not what temporal advantages they ſhall enjoy, but how they may crown their lives with a glorious immortality, leaving the reſt to the Providence of God, and the peace of mind which virtue always inſures. Being *reminded* that *death* muſt be her lot, this honeſt girl is warned in the ſtrongeſt terms, to expect a *judgment to come*; and that one of theſe two things muſt follow: either ſhe will be *happy* in *heaven*, or *miſerable* in *hell*. She is therefore adviſed that

that whatever her preſent condition may be, to build her hopes on a foundation more permanent than the globe on which ſhe ſtands.

Character of the farmer's daughter. In conſidering the happy effects of a virtuous life, in the perſon of a young woman, you will obſerve that this *Farmer's Daughter* is not introduced under the ambiguous circumſtances of a *Pamela*, but in ſuch a ſtate of innocency, as to be ſuſceptible of the generous ſentiments which chriſtianity inſpires. She is not elevated with the hopes of riding in her coach, nor taught how to inveigle a young maſter, but reminded of the advantages of being *honeſt* and *pious*, agreeable to her miſtreſs, and perchance of being one day married to a laborious *honeſt man*.—To avoid the extremes of an undue encouragement in promoting the indigent above their proper rank, ſhe is left to her own diſcretion: If ſhe obſerves the rules preſcribed by her Father, ſhe cannot fail of being happy.

Influence of a good parent. The inſtruction here conveyed by a tender Father to his Daughter, how to conduct her ſteps in the ſlippery paths of life, comprehends almoſt every condition, whilſt it *admoniſhes* thoſe, who by their negligence inſinuate, as if one human being were leſs valuable, in the great view of happineſs, than another.

The rational affection of a parent for a child, carries with it the idea of the trueſt charity, and the moſt exalted philanthrophy: It is one of the pureſt offerings which can be made to the great Father of Mankind: The moſt virtuous hold it as ſacred, as the contrary is abhorrent to common honeſty. When we extend this conſideration to the ſtate after death, all ſublunary things look mean. The Father being himſelf perſuaded of the immortality of the ſoul, ſpares no pains to preſerve his Daughter; and like a *wiſe man* and a chriſtian, is anxious to make her a fit inhabitant of heaven. Happy the land where the authority of a parent is duly exerciſed; and where his love for his children is equally pious and judicious, devoid of that *partiality* which is ſo apt to extinguiſh the light of reaſon; yet ſo *tender* as to engage him in any hazard, rather than behold them in danger of everlaſting puniſhment.

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If you ſhould apprehend that this young pupil is treated with more *civility* than is uſually ſhewn to perſons in her ſtation, you muſt recollect that her inſtructor appears in the character of her Father, and that her ſex entitles her to ſuch a behaviour. We are often deficient in this reſpect towards our *equals* and *ſuperiors*; and more towards our *inferiors*: the evil ſeems to grow out of *liberty*, and may be owing to the property our women enjoy, more on an equality with men, than in ſome other countries; or perhaps being generally left as the guardians of their own honour, we ſuppoſe them capable of being their own protectors: To whatever cauſe we aſcribe the want of civility which we often ſee, it is the offence which women can leaſt forgive. *Civility due to women in all ſtations.*

This is however a virtue of the inferior claſs, being little more than a mechanical kind of decorum; but it helps to poliſh manners, and refine politeneſs into humanity, which is the beſt preparative for the duties of a chriſtian. Upon this principle, *men* ſhould ſometimes yield up a portion of what they deem their prerogative, rather than by a rigid exaction of right, do wrong, by departing from the rules of civility to women.

Gentle treatment is beſt calculated to make an impreſſion on the native ingenuouſneſs of the female mind; and it is more eaſy to flatter women into a love of virtue, than prevent their being vicious merely by denouncing vengeance. Where nothing but terror is preſented to the mind, it naturally creates an abhorrence, which often terminates in a contempt of inſtruction, or a deſpair of amendment.

In the ſacrifices which the ancient heathen world offered to *Juno*, on occaſion of their marriages, it was their cuſtom to throw the *gall* of the victim behind the altar, to ſhew that nothing but *harmony* ſhould reign in that ſtate of life. How much more are the worſhippers of the true God, and believers in the religion of *Chriſt*, in every relation they ſtand to each other, to abſtain from all habits tending to diſturb peace and concord. This being a common obligation eſſential to decency and decorum, it ſhould always be attended to with the utmoſt care.

Deſcription of the Father. The Father of this young woman *is a worthy* and *an honeſt man:* He has formerly been an upper ſervant, and by attending to his maſter's converſation, and reading ſome of his books, he has picked up knowledge, and applies it to real uſe; which is more than ſome of his ſuperiors, renowned for their intellectual endowments, have had ſenſe enough to do. He reſpects the *memory* of a *good maſter*; a property not much in faſhion: he hath not forgotten the leſſons received from him, ſuch as few *maſters* give, and fewer *ſervants* think worthy of remembrance when given: He now retails them to his daughter, with the piety of a *father* and the tenderneſs of a *friend.*

Reflections on humble life. Neither father nor daughter ſay or do any thing romantic, or beyond what is ſometimes found in real life. If we behold a good man, whoſe heart is in its proper place, and whoſe blood beats time with his reaſon and underſtanding, though his condition be humble, if he has ſeen the world, and is capable of drawing the line between the *virtues* and *vices* of it, the more we enter into his life and manners, the more uſeful leſſons we ſhall learn from him: for let us examine things with the utmoſt preciſion, and we ſhall find that it is a man's *own works*, and not *another man's words*, which muſt exalt him. There are many *envied*, becauſe of the praiſe beſtowed on them, though in reality they are wretched. We are not indeed to ſeek for reaſoning *philoſophers* in villages; but there *are* more, in that ſituation, who are *practically* ſuch, than the *great* imagine. Whatever complaints thoſe who live in affluence may ſometimes have reaſon to make, the villager often bears a number of cares more like a reaſonable and accountable Being, than people in high life uſually ſupport a ſingle ſollicitude: and the reaſon ſeems to be, that with the *humble* and *laborious*, the *body* and the *mind* are both kept in action; and the ſucceſs which crowns the induſtry of a virtuous man, affords matter for triumph in his breaſt: for though it ſhould only give him a ſcanty meal, yet it allays the *miſeries* which invade his condition, and gratifies his underſtanding and affections: But the *ſickneſs* of the heart, created by *redundance*, the viciſſitudes of *fortune*, or the turbulency of con-

contending *paſſions*, puts the whole frame into a *fever*; and the mind ſeeks reſt in objects which cannot give it; or looks out for ſome diſtant *precarious* good, in the flattering hopes of graſping at joy, which generally eludes the embrace.

The love of *peace* and *reſt* is natural to a well-ordered mind: but it is evident to *experience*, that where the powers of it are divided by a habit of contending with *many difficulties*, the burthen of them is not ſo heavy as when it has only *one great care* to combat: and it often happens that a *change of circumſtances*, with regard to *riches*, which ſo much diſtinguiſhes mankind, though it may *change our objects*, it does not render us more happy than we were before. The reaſon of this alſo is obvious; for *habit*, *health*, and *turn of mind*, conſtitute felicity more than *fortune*.

The honeſt peaſant dies in the order of nature, and calmly reſigns his life: the rich are often in miſery from the dread of parting with their wealth, and are torn from the earth, with the ſin of reluctance to ſubmit to the decrees of heaven. It often happens that we are apt to fix our thoughts ſo attentively on things the *world* calls *good*, either in proſpect or enjoyment, that we neglect to make preparation for the *evils* which ſo often attend them: It is therefore no wonder to ſee ſo great a part of mankind languiſh in ſecret for *contentment* and *peace of mind*; for if theſe are only the rewards of virtue, it is in vain to ſeek for them in *riches*, *honours*, or *worldly glory!*

In this view we may meditate on the thoughts of our inferiors, to as great advantage as the various windings of the ſoul, under the circumſtances of the moſt refined education: and from hence we may alſo learn to contemplate the amazing benignity of the great Author of Nature, and pour forth our gratitude to him, for his wiſdom and goodneſs in thus framing the conſtitution of the moral world. Every diſcharge of duty from one human being to another, in every ſtate and condition, carries the mind to the fountain of all goodneſs, from whence ſuch ſtreams of benignity flow, that the *more good* we do, the more we delight in doing it, till at length cuſtom becomes a ſecond nature.

Thus whilſt we earneſtly endeavour to promote the welfare

of others, if we *chaſtiſe* ourſelves ſo effectually as to be *totally reſigned* to the will of heaven, we may juſtly call ourſelves happy. If it were upon this principle only, I had fondly imagined myſelf capable of inſpiring others with ſuch ſentiments, charity might plead for me; for I have ſo deep a ſenſe of the power of religion, to do all that I ſay of it, that I conſider my poor labours, as an offering which I ought to make at the altars of piety and humanity; hoping that what I have ſaid in this book, will, in good time, make its way to the hearts of many, and anſwer the purpoſe intended.

It is the property of fancy to enlarge, and the office of judgment to contract: but amidſt ſuch a diverſity of ſubjects calculated to entertain and inſtruct, I found it difficult to ſay leſs, and at the ſame time familiarize my thoughts to my unlettered reader. As this book is branched out luxuriantly, and will probably be the cloſe of my labours of this kind, I hope it will be generally uſeful, and ſerve as a library to ſuch, whoſe reading is within a ſmall compaſs. In the mean time, piety and humility, without diſtinction of conditions, are eſſential to our common welfare.

In every view, this book is the beſt legacy which I ſhall probably be in a capacity of leaving, either to thoſe who want, or to them that abound; and if they think it good, they will ſeek it.

All the tracts which I have introduced into the world, my travels not excepted *(a)*, have been deſigned for purpoſes which I apprehended might be for the public welfare *(b)*, or for the benefit of public charities *(c*, page xlii.)

or

(a) Travels into Perſia, 4 vol. 4to. 1753. The 2d and 3d edit. 2 vol. 4to. the *Dublin* edition, 2 vol. 8vo. &c. N. B. They contain an Account of the *Britiſh Caſpian Trade*.

(b) A Letter againſt the Naturalization of the Jews, 8vo. 1753.
Thoughts on the ſame Subject, written at Tunbridge, 8vo. 1753.
Review of the propoſed Naturalization of the Jews, 1 vol. 8vo. 1753.
Letters admonitory and argumentative on ditto, to J. S. 8vo. 1753.

The two laſt were written in conſequence of a Voyage I made the ſame year to Holland and France, where I enquired into the truth

or to be *given* to the individual (*d*, page xliv). Theſe offerings were made with a view to promote a ſenſe of religion

of the pretended facts, on which the propoſed naturalization was founded, and I obtained the moſt authentic evidence that the uſefulneſs of Jews in the eſteem of the Dutch and French, ariſes only from their mercantile capacity; whereas the incorporation implied by naturalization, ſeemed to be pregnant with many dangerous inconſiſtencies, with regard to poſſeſſions in land, and religious œconomy.

A Reply to Mr. Spranger, in relation to paving the Streets, 8vo. 1754.

Thoughts on ditto, 8vo. not publiſhed, though printed, the paving being actually begun about this time upon a regular plan.

Thoughts on Invaſion, 8vo. Pamphlet, 1755.

A Morning's Thought on the Pamphlet named *Teſt* and *Conteſt*, 8vo. Pamphlet.

A Journal of Eight days, a ſecond edition, in 2 vol. 8vo. 1757.

The firſt edition in 4to. was not publiſhed, but given to my friends.

The chief object of this book was tea: The indiſcriminate uſe of this drug, in ſuch profuſion, and by all ranks, is generally acknowledged to be a national abſurdity; but it goes too deep for any relief to be expected—till we are tired.

Reaſons for an augmentation of at leaſt twelve thouſand ſeamen, to be employed, in time of peace, beyond our uſual number. Pamphlet, 4to. 1759.

The principle on which this book was written, is, that it is the intereſt of commerce to contribute more to its own ſupport, with regard to the breed of ſeamen, and that the nation will, in the iſſue, be a gainer, if merchant ſhips navigate with a few more hands. This ſeems to be tacitly acknowledged, but it is one of the ſecrets in ſtate which neceſſity only will develop.

Eight Letters to his Grace the Duke of ———, on the cuſtom of Vails-giving, 8vo. 1760.

The Sentiments and Advice of *Thomas Trueman*, a Servant, to his Brother *Jonathan*, on taking of Vails, 8vo. 1760.

The argument is founded in the perſuaſion, that it is far better to increaſe wages to domeſtics, than perplex maſter and ſervant by ſo *illiberal, untoward, and diſhonourable a practice*.

Reaſons for ſerious Candour, in relation to vulgar Deciſions concerning Peace and War, 8vo. Pamphlet, 1762.

A candid Hiſtorical Account of the Hoſpital for the Reception of expoſed and deſerted young Children, 8vo. 1759, 2d edit.

The

gion and morality, in which many of our fellow ſubjects ſeemed to be very deficient. If any of them deſerve a memorial,

The *firſt* edition was not publiſhed.

This was drawn from knowledge of the practical part, and calculated to prove, from facts, that the *indiſcriminate* reception of infants, is productive of the greateſt evils to their lives and to the morals of the common people in general.

N. B. The next ſeſſions the ſupplies for farther reception, on ſuch terms, were withheld.

Propoſals for a ſaving to the Public, by giving Apprentice-Fees with Foundlings. 8vo.

N. B. This was calculated chiefly to obtain the greater choice of maſters and miſtreſſes for theſe poor children, and to engage proper perſons to take them ſo much the ſooner.

Serious Conſiderations on the ſalutary Deſign of the Act of Parliament for a regular uniform Regiſter of the Pariſh Poor, in all the Pariſhes within the Bills of Mortality, 8vo, 1762.

This act was obtained for the purpoſe of inveſtigating the object preparatory to another act.

An earneſt Appeal for Mercy to the Children of the Poor, particularly theſe belonging to the Pariſhes within the Bills of Mortality, appointed by Act of Parliament to be regiſtered, 4to. 1766.

N. B. This gave evidence drawn from the regiſters, whereby the grievous mortality appeared under the pariſh officers own hands.

Letters on the Importance of the riſing Generation of the labouring Part of our Fellow Subjects, in 2 vol. 8vo. 1767.

N. B. A further act of parliament was obtained the next ſeſſions, whereby the means of preſerving the infant poor was pointed out.

Letters to the *Guardians* of the Infant Poor, 8vo. Pamphlet, 1767.

N. B. This was in conſequence of the actual appointment by law of ſuch officers to be choſen triennially, to ſee the act executed, and juſtice done to the infants.

(c) *A Letter from a Member of the Marine Society*, 1756.

N. B. The eſtabliſhment of this ſociety, and the neceſſity of numerous applications for money to carry on the deſign, brought this into ſeven editions: One of theſe was preſented to the King, who gave 1000 l.

Motives for eſtabliſhing the Marine Society, in 4to, the 7th edition.

Three Letters on the Subject of the Marine Society, in 4to.

An Account of the Marine Society, in one vol. 8vo. 1759.

This

morial, I hope they will be reprinted; but particularly the following tracts:

The

This comprehends a detail of all their proceedings, rules and orders, &c.

Origin and Present State of the Marine Society, &c. in 12mo. 1770.

In general this object has succeeded to the wishes of the benefactors to it; and we are indebted to the good policy and benevolence of the merchants and citizens of London for the establishment and execution, being totally independant of, and unconnected with, Sir John Fielding. See *Origin*, &c. This society has fitted out 5700 boys, and 5400 men, at the cost of about 27000 l. R. Lord Romney, Chairman. J. Thornton, Esq; Treasurer.

An Account of the Society for the Encouragement of British Troops, one vol. 8vo, 1759. Andrew Thompson, Esq; Treasurer.

This was an act of gratitude, by permission of the King, to those brave men who carried on a severe winter's campaign in Germany and North-America in 1759. 6000 l. were collected and laid out chiefly in flannel waistcoats, shoes and stockings, and 1300 l. more disposed of to the widows and orphans of soldiers.

Motives for a Subscription for the Relief of the Sufferers by Fire at Montreal——Three editions in 8vo and 12mo, 1765. J. Thornton, Esq; Treasurer.

N. B. A book was presented to the King, who gave 500 l.

This was attended with happy effects; for the liberality of our fellow subjects, by private subscription, and by a brief, raised 11,700 l. The charges being deducted, 10,800 l. have been actually remitted in silver, towards a loss of 87,580 l.

Letter to Robert Dingley, Esq; being a Proposal for the Employment and Relief of friendless Girls turned Prostitutes, 4to. Pamphlet, 1758.

N. B. This was in consequence of Mr. Dingley's having communicated his thoughts to me on this subject in 1751.

Thoughts on a Magdalen Charity, 4to. Pamphlet, 1758.

A Plan for the better Regulation of a Magdalen Charity, 4to. Pamphlet, 1759.

Letters on the Customs of foreign Nations with regard to Penitent Prostitutes, and the great Humanity and Usefulness of a Magdalen Charity in London, one vol. 8vo, 1761.

Essays and Meditations on Life and Practical Religion, with a Collection of Proverbs, one vol. 8vo, 1763.

N. B.

The Soldier's Friend, 12mo,

The Inſtructions to Apprentices, 12mo,

The Seaman's Companion, 12mo. to be abridged.

The Letters on the Magdalen Charity, to be abridged;

The Chriſtian Officer, to be 12mo: if ſome able penman would ſelect ſuch parts of it as are moſt proper, and digeſt them into a little tract, we might hope it would be profitable to themſelves, without whoſe attention it is not to be preſumed common ſoldiers will behave like chriſtians. We live in a chriſtian country, ruled by a chriſtian Prince: and the common ſenſe of mankind prompts them to promote a ſenſe of religion and piety among thoſe who are to fight their battles, in confidence of the protection of the great Lord of Hoſts. Whether *piety* will become faſhionable without the interpoſition of ſome national calamity, is hard to ſay: we may *hope* that by the mere force of the good ſenſe and virtue which ſtill maintains its ground amongſt us, we ſhall ſubdue the evils which invade us. We are diſtinguiſhed in ſcience,

N. B. The two laſt were originally made in 2 vol. entitled, Reflections, Eſſays, and Meditations on Life and Religion.

Thoughts on the Uſe and Advantages of Muſic, and other Amuſements, 8vo, 1765.

N. B. This was intended as a check on certain perſons of the author's acquaintance in high life, who carried their muſical entertainments *on the Sabbath day* further than they at firſt intended.

(d) The Chriſtian Officer, addreſſed to the Officers of his Majeſty's Forces, including the Militia, vol. 8vo, 1766.

The Soldier's Faithful Friend; being prudential, moral, and religious Advice to private Men in the Army and Militia, vol. 8vo, 1766.

Ditto (being an Abſtract) in ſmall 12mo, 1766.

N. B. Theſe were not publiſhed, but given away: about half the coſt aroſe from a balance remaining at the diſpoſal of the Society for the Encouragement of the Troops, &c.

The Seaman's Companion, in 12mo, 1763.

Moral and Religious Inſtructions, intended for Apprentices among the lower Claſſes of the People, 12mo, 1767.

Advice from a Farmer to his Daughter, 3 vol. 12mo, 1770.

N. B. Calculated to promote moral and religious conduct in ſervitude and common life, and the foundation of this book.

ſcience, in arms, in arts, and opulency: and I hope that Heaven, in compaſſion to a ſituation, which ſubjects us ſo much to error, has this good in ſtore for us and our poſterity! But unhappily theſe operate on our *police*, and in ſome meaſure militate againſt our liberty. I have ventured to communicate my conceits on an intereſting ſubject (*a*), in relation to the converſion of *Bridewell-Hoſpital*. The title-page of this book furniſhes many hints for improvement: the book itſelf may furniſh more.—The objects are obvious and ſtriking; and in nothing more, than the abſurdity of maintaining of *arts-maſters*, who are really no other than weavers. Theſe are confeſſedly of no kind of uſe beyond any others. The fact is well known, that the weavers of *Spitalfields* have taken ſuch a number of apprentices, to anſwer occaſional demands for work, they overwhelmed themſelves; inſomuch that the legiſlature reſtrained them with regard to the number of indentured ſervants.

Private corporation intereſt.

Domeſtic peace, and public ſecurity, ſometimes demand the ſacrifice of private corporation intereſt, in the emolument of a few individuals: but this is extremely difficult to accompliſh.

The governors of *Bridewell-Hoſpital*, are a reſpectable body. As they have the direction of no inconſiderable part of the police of theſe cities, it might be expected they ſhould uſe all the means in their power, to eſtabliſh a plan to *prevent* great evils, by a ſalutary œconomy in the correction of ſmall offences: but I fear not many of them think about it.

Every

(*a*) Obſervations on the cauſes of the *diſſoluteneſs* which reigns among the lower claſſes of the people: The propenſity of ſome to petty larceny; the danger of gaming; concubinage; and an exceſſive fondneſs for amuſement. Alſo an account of the humanity and policy of the corporation of the *Marine-Society*. The ſtate of the *London-Work-houſe*; and the uſefulneſs and piety of the *Magdalen-Hoſpital*, &c. With a propoſal for regulating *Bridewell*, in order to render it of important ſervice to the police of *London*. Likewiſe a plan for preventing the extraordinary mortality of the children of the labouring poor in *London* and *Weſtminſter*. In three letters to a governor of *Bridewell*, *Bethlem*, *Chriſt-Church*, &c. A quarto pamphlet, ſold by *J.* and *F. Rivington*, St. *Paul's Church-yard*, 1772. Price Two Shillings.

Danger to morals in our prisons.

Every one the least acquainted with *police*, must know, that our prisons operate as schools, to teach all kind of villainy; whilst the bringing a prisoner, by the force of reason and religion, to a sense of his guilt, hath not been duly considered. He that is young in iniquity, and those who are in the most confirmed habits of it, are not distinguished as they ought to be.

Reformation with regard to this world, or preparation for the life after death, are the great objects always before us. The attendance of a clergyman in *public* praying, however useful and necessary, doth not come home to the breast of the individual, in the manner that I propose.

The crime of mixing all kinds of offenders.

The deplorable state of young offenders, by being mixed with those who are masters in the arts of villainy, suggested to me that *Bridewell-Hospital*, in place of entertaining arts-masters, might be converted into *cells*, as a reformatory at least for petty criminals: a thing much wanted to prevent many from becoming capital offenders.

Absurdity of arts-masters in Bridewell.

The ancient institution of arts-masters, is absolutely as unnecessary, as it is become ridiculous. It hath been under deliberation, to change the purport of the charter in this instance, the end and design of the judicious Queen *Elizabeth* having been long since accomplished. But the governors, thinking they had not power to alter the appropriation, have declined the consideration, notwithstanding they are sensible, that the difficulty may be easily redressed by parliament. They confess their present corporate authority to be deficient: they allow the impropriety of continuing the design of arts-masters; they acknowledge that they might be instrumental to establish a more regular discipline, to correct the immoralities of the lower classes of the people: but here they stop:—Why they do so, I apprehend is owing partly to the indolence, which often happens where people are not to gain any private advantage; and partly to some other cause, in which particulars may be more immediately concerned.

Bethlem.

It is not that I mean their present funds should be alienated: *Bethlem* calls for *all* they now spend

on their arts-masters. That noble and humane object requires their attention in the highest degree. But if *they* find building, and accommodation for this *preventive design of cells*, the city of *London*, for the sake of her own internal safety, may defray the *additional expence* of conducting such design.

Usefulness of cells for offenders.

What numbers of wretched beings might be kept out of the hands of magistrates for *great crimes*, provided they were properly chastised for offences of a less atrocious nature, without erasing their native impressions of shame, by an intermixture with capital offenders, and the dregs of human kind! This is an interesting consideration! How might the sorrows of parents and masters be prevented from bursting into agonies, by the skilful use of *cells*, or *chambers of solitude*, to be visited only by those who bring food, and a judicious, pious clergyman. The confinement might be for a greater or a lesser number of days, till the offender was brought to a sense of his guilt, in the sight of God, the magistrate, or parent.

Futility of the objection.

The only arguments which I have heard *against* the plan proposed, are the strongest *for* it; namely, that it would be *terrible*.—They say,

1. Would you treat malefactors with so little humanity, as to allow them no fire in the extremity of cold weather?

I answer, let us not lose our object: there are ways of making apartments warm, without trusting the party with fire, if this should be thought expedient. The cells may likewise have boarded floorings, with proper bedding, warm clothing, &c. according to the quality of the malefactor, and the nature of the offence. There are now many who never see a fire in prison.

2. The terror would drive them into madness.

I rather apprehend it would bring the major part to their senses, and cure That insane rage of iniquity, which seems to have established its empire in the hearts of such numbers of our fellow-subjects. The humanity intended to be exercised by the instruction given them, would soon drive away this argument as chaff is driven before the wind.

The proposal may perchance require more virtue and good-sense, than may be easily collected by a corporation; and

more energy than will be found, unleſs the legiſlature takes up the conſideration of it.

It is an anſwer to ſuch queſtions to aſk: Is the company of the moſt abandoned wretches to be preferred to ſolitude? Is reformation to be wrought by keeping the worſt company in the world? If without injury to *mind* or *perſon*, a young man or woman can be brought to a proper ſenſe of duty by this means, and ſo far ſaved from the gallows, is it not a moſt deſirable object?

Various objects of police.

The pamphlet in queſtion, contains *various propoſals*, none of which I apprehend to be romantic or impracticable. Since the time in which I wrote it, the legiſlature has made proviſion for clergymen to attend priſons: but this anſwers only a ſmall part of the idea of ſolitude in cells.

Upon this pamphlet I have further to remark, that if malefactors who are to die by ſentence of the laws, were conducted to their execution in a more awful manner, it could not but adminiſter ſomething towards weakening the force of the levity that prevails even in death. We often obſerve, that this extends itſelf to many delinquents, even in that dreadful hour. And if it did not ſtrike *them* with awe, perhaps it might be ſo managed, as to make impreſſions on others.

Propriety of correcting the aſſize of bread.

My next object was our *bread* (*a*). The iniquity of the times hath long ſince extended itſelf even to the adulteration of this part of our aliment. It will appear to every one the leaſt converſant in the nature of bread, that the ſtandard bread propoſed, is ſweeter and more ſalutary than the *wheaten*, as ſo called,

(*a*) A letter on occaſion of the public enquiry, concerning the moſt fit and proper bread to be aſſized for general uſe; ſhewing the difficulty of executing the act of the 31ſt. Geo. II. in a beneficial manner to the poor; the conſtant uſage and cuſtom with regard to bread for many centuries; the folly of eating bread known to be made white by art and adulteration, and the great advantages of eating pure bread made of all the flour, including the heart of the wheat, as the moſt ſalutary, agreeable and nutritive aliment. Recommended as an object of a very ſerious and important nature. Printed for Mrs. *Woodfall*, at *Charing Croſs*, and *J. Brotherton* and *Sewell*, near the *Royal-Exchange*.

called, near 9 *per cent* cheaper; yet containing nothing but wheaten flour. The millar and mealman, however, not chuſing we ſhould underſtand what parts of the wheat we are eating, the deſign is yet unaccompliſhed. The flour of which the bread is to be made, is clearly aſcertained; and ſo may the quality of the bread: but, as a melancholy evidence how we prey on each other, oppoſition is made to one of the moſt ſalutary regulations of *police*. The inveſtigation of this object became a duty, ariſing from my office under the crown. The commiſſioners for victualling the king's ſhips in 1767, having been required by the Houſe of Commons to make certain experiments with regard to the produce of wheat in genuine bread, I attended them, and communicated the knowledge I had collected; and am ſure of my facts.

Deplorable ſtate of young chimney-ſweepers.

All the world has long beheld the forlorn hope of human nature, in the perſons of young *chimney-ſweepers*, in theſe cities. It pleaſed Divine Providence to ſuggeſt to me, that poſſibly ſomething might be done towards their relief (*a*). In conſequence of a ſmall collection, twenty of them were clothed, and their reports committed to writing. Maſter chimney-ſweepers have been acquainted, in a formal printed letter, that their fellow-ſubjects are apprized of the manner in which theſe poor boys are uſually treated; and how the evil may be remedied. The condition of ſome of theſe miſerable beings, has been mended; and it is probable, that others may receive the ſame benefit, either by perſuading, or legally compelling the maſters to do their duty. The grand ſource of the *abuſe* conſiſts in this, that the number of apprentices taken by theſe maſters, exceeds the moral poſſibility of providing

(*a*) The ſtate of chimney-ſweepers young apprentices; ſhewing the wretched condition of theſe diſtreſt boys; the ill conduct of ſuch maſters as do not obſerve the obligations of indentures; the neceſſity of a ſtrict enquiry, in order to ſupport the civil and religious rights of theſe apprentices; to encourage good maſters, and regulate the trade; that the uſeful occupation of chimney-ſweepers may be conſidered as an object worthy of attention; and the humanity of the nation be no longer violated in the perſons of theſe boys. 1773. Sold at the pamphlet-ſhops.

viding for them; and conſequently, they create miſery, as it were, by a wanton practice, which no law, divine or human, can juſtify.

The *weavers* being reſtrained from taking above a certain number of apprentices, in order that *their trade* may not be overwhelmed, and individuals expoſed to diſtreſs: ſhould not the *chimney-ſweepers* be conſidered in the ſame view? If the liberty of every ſubject is really ſacred, this object demands a parliamentary enquiry.

Act for ſtandard wheaten bread.

The *act of parliament*, expected in my former pamphlet on bread, having paſſed; the quality of the bread ſpecified; and the period arrived to carry it into execution, I found a general reluctance prevailed among *millers*, to bring to market the flour of all the wheat, which the act ſo clearly aſcertains; the reaſon of which, I have juſt mentioned. I was again called upon, by a ſenſe of duty in office, as well as a concern for the common welfare, to publiſh the ſtate of the caſe in an *octavo* pamphlet (*a*).

Upon conſidering the arguments contained therein, it appears to me, that the object requires a reviſion of the act, as well as patience, candour, and moderation. The charge of manufacturing every ſort of bread, is nearly the ſame; but with reſpect to the quality of the flour, when the quartern-loaf of *wheaten* bread ſtands aſſized to be ſold at *eight-pence*, the quartern-loaf of *ſtandard* bread ſhould, I apprehend, be *ſeven-pence farthing*, not *ſeven-pence*, as the act requires. This ſeems to have been a miſtake, by which 45,000*l.* *per annum*, would

(*a*) The great advantage of eating pure and genuine bread, comprehending the heart of the wheat, with all its flour; ſhewing how it may contribute to the health and profit of the people, and the increaſe of the quantity of bread, preſerving infants from the grave, by deſtroying the uſe of alum, and the ingredients to whiten our preſent wheaten bread: propoſing to end the conteſt amicably, by allowing, upon proper authority, a *farthing* on a quartern loaf more than ſeems to be provided for by the *preſent act*, with *reſpect* to the proportion of 7 d. for the *ſtandard*, and 8d. for the *wheaten* bread. Printed for Mrs. *Woodfall*, at *Charing-Croſs*; *J. Brotherton* and *Sewell*, near the *Royal-Exchange*; and to be had at the pamphlet-ſhops.

would be found ſhort in the emoluments of the trade. Some of the principal promoters of the bill are of opinion, that *ſtandard bread* of all the flour, ſhould be produced for the price of 7*d.* when the *wheaten bread* is at 8*d.* To me it appears, that allowing a *farthing* more, is a right meaſure, as the profits, on the avowed principles of the trade, are by this means provided for;—or we are much impoſed on as to the parts of the wheat we now eat in the *wheaten bread.* It can be of no conſequence to the mealman what bread is aſſized: he demands his price for the flour; yet he is repugnant, owing to his ſecret reſerves.

I find, not only from my own experience, but the united teſtimony of the candid part of the bakers, that bread made of the whole flour of the wheat, is really and truly the beſt kind, for the good purpoſes of aliment, with reſpect to health: I find it alſo the moſt agreeable. It is ſo much the cheapeſt, that in the conſumption of theſe cities, above 100,000*l. per annum* may be ſaved. If the common people are not apprized of the real nature of the caſe, and the ſuperior claſſes are indolent, the act in queſtion muſt go through ſome further reviſion, in hopes to give the people juſt impreſſions, drawn from real facts, and exhibitions of bread, and not the fallacious accounts of intereſted perſons, who attempt to involve the ſubject in difficulties, and propagate abominable falſhoods.

Remarks on the author's publications.

Thus have I enumerated ſuch of my books and pamphlets, as I have been able to recollect; which, in general, were zealouſly intended to promote the cauſe of religion and humanity, in which I include police, war, and civilization. Some of them have been attended with notable ſucceſs: others have operated in part. If the judicious reader, whoſe ſituation may be at leaſt as free and independent as mine, ſhould feel his heart impreſſed with the ſame kind of deſire, with regard to the public, the intimations given him may be of uſe. I alſo flatter myſelf, that upon this principle I ſhall ſtand juſtified in mentioning theſe ſeveral works: theſe, together with the active connections relating to them, compoſe no inconſiderable part of the hiſtory of my life, from the time I ſet off for *Ruſſia*, in *May* 1743, to the preſent æra.

SECT.

SECTION IV.

Further remarks on the characters.

I Muſt now return to my *preſent lucubration.* It hath been ſuggeſted, that I might have made the hero of my *drama* to have travelled with his maſter; and conſequently, to have *ſeen*, rather than *heard*, what he ſpeaks of occaſionally. I anſwer, that the familiar communication of ſentiment, by a maſter to a *faithful* and *intelligent* domeſtic, in the character of an humble friend, leaving him many opportunities of improvement by reading, he may learn much more than were he to ride poſt as a groom, through all *Europe* and *Aſia*. Nor doth it appear, that his maſter makes any *parade*, as a *traveller*, though he hath been in ſeveral countries; ſpeaking only of what he hath obſerved, as applicable to the ſubject of familiar diſcourſe, in the diffuſe way of common converſation.

The *characters* in this ſentimental drama, are to be meaſured by what they *ſay*, and not by their external condition: ſome, by the force of good ſenſe and obſervation, of no higher rank, have known much more. Such truths as mine, are the appendages of reaſon, and the rudiments of religion.

Whatever the quality of my reader may be, if he is the more inſpired by the love of virtue; if his underſtanding is in any degree improved, his heart exalted, or his imagination corrected; if he thinks in a more liberal and comprehenſive manner than he did before; or if he is only *amuſed*, I have done him good. The poor and humble will probably regard the converſation the more, from the rank in which I place my characters.

Perſons of genius ſeldom apply their talents to the ſervice of the unlettered.

To apply reading and reflection to the great ends of life, is the firſt concern: and thoſe who move in a higher ſphere, are generally as deficient as the lower in their ſituation: yet it rarely happens, that the wants of the humble and indigent, become the object of men, whoſe talents entitle

entitle them to a place in the eſteem of the *great*. The natural pride of the heart, induces them to ſeek thoſe regions, where worldly ambition may ſoar. I have entertained no ſuch thought; and therefore accommodate myſelf to the underſtandings and hearts of thoſe who move in a lower ſphere.

We depreciate the common people, when we meaſure their capacities in general, by the low ſtandard of ſome individuals. I have converſed with many of them, and have good reaſon to think there is nothing in theſe pages, which may not be well reliſhed by the ſober-minded. I have carefully avoided aſcending ſo high, as to be out of the reach of the unlettered; or ſinking ſo low, as to excite the diſdain of the polite world.

The chief object of the book.

My chief object is to inſpire juſt ſentiments, how much *parental piety* and *authority*, *filial duty* and *obedience*, conſtitute the ſpring from whence *religion*, *domeſtic peace* and *good order*, conſtantly flow; and without which, eternal bliſs cannot be obtained. To give perſons, in *humble life*, the higheſt impreſſions of the charms of virtue, is, in other words, to give them juſt notions of ſubmiſſion to Providence, and the moſt ſolid reaſons for contentment. Where ſhall we find a more intereſting theme? Were I able to dip my pen in evangelic ink; or ſoar on eagles wings to empyreal heights, inſtead of wandering through the humble haunts of peaſants; how could I render my object more worthy of my charity or zeal?

The more intelligent reader will find ſome of the thoughts, and words, of the beſt writers, with which the middle, or inferior orders of the people, are not ſuppoſed to be acquainted. If the choice is good, can it be imagined, that a fine ſentiment, reduced to the ſtandard of their comprehenſion, will diſpleaſe them? May not the novelty rather ſtrike the more forcibly? Coin freſh from the hoard, if it looks new, pleaſes the eye, more than That which is leſs brilliant, though perchance of equal value. The peaſant often laughs and weeps, in as good time and place as his ſuperiors. Many an huſbandman has been as truly worthy the name of a *philoſopher*, as the moſt diſtinguiſhed patriot or citizen. If he believes the great truths of the Chriſtian religion, it is ſufficient to make the reſt of my work familiar to him.

Difficulty of the undertaking.

A performance of this kind, ſeems to require the moſt ſimple language; yet, as coming from a layman, or a gentleman, unleſs it hath a degree of elegancy, it cannot be ſuppoſed to make an impreſſion. To render the ſcene occaſionally pleaſing, is alſo neceſſary to ſuch a work; yet the dignity of the deſign muſt be preſerved; the thoughts familiarized; and no common intereſting truth concealed from thoſe, whoſe reading lies within a narrow compaſs. To explore the regions of thought, as they open to the mind in converſation; yet not to launch into a field of reaſoning, which may perplex the *unlettered*, is a taſk of ſome difficulty.

Sentiments of a country girl.

In theſe ſeveral views, the applauſe of an honeſt country girl, may be more flattering than any encomiums, from thoſe, whoſe erudition and polite taſte, otherwiſe claim the higheſt regard. When we exhibit works of the heart, aſſiſted by common-ſenſe, with ſtrictures drawn from *experience*, and knowledge of ſuch facts as affect the minds of others, we may be ſure of a favourable reception, at leaſt from thoſe who are not too refined. The father ſpares no pains in communicating ſuch ſentiments to his daughter, as may produce the great end he has in view: and we may ſuppoſe, that by time and converſation, ſhe becomes intelligent.

I have already made an application (*a*) to the heart of one *young lady*, in defence of the general principle of giving my book ſo religious a tincture. I feel myſelf again threatened with a dart from ſome brilliant eye, for making my country girl *ſo wiſe*; and I have accordingly prepared my defence.

Addreſs to another lady.

" *Madam*, If you pleaſe, you may drop the country girl: and if, in your eſteem, the education which her father can give her, amidſt rural ſcenes, and ideas drawn from nature, is far ſhort of That procured by means of mercenary maſters in great cities, conſider only the well-informed young woman, who is a *genuine Chriſtian*, no matter whether ſhe makes *butter* in a churn, or embroiders in gold and ſilk, on a *tambour*. As to the merits of her occupation, you will find more men diſpoſed to give up a

Galla

(*a*) Page xxxiii.

Galla waiſtcoat, though wrought by the hands of their greateſt *favourite*, than renounce their favourite breakfaſt. It is ſometimes dangerous to make compariſons, or I might add, that native modeſty and ſimplicity have charms, which no laboured arts can bring ſo near the throne on which the *graces* ſit.

This character comprehends ſuch excellency, as renders all accidental ſuperiority but the ſhadow of an unſubſtantial viſion: we muſt ſeek for *wiſdom* in it; and not form our judgment by any finical rules of faſhionable delicacy. Whether an addreſs to the poor, or to the rich; to the fine lady, or the bearded philoſopher, requires the beſt abilities, you may judge as you pleaſe. As things are now managed, the taſk I have undertaken, may be conſidered as an arduous enterprize; for great riches, and extreme poverty, ſuperficial knowledge, and groſs ignorance, equally militate againſt *religion*. If, in attempting to guard her ſacred ſhrine, I ſuffer, I expect no miracle to be wrought in my favour: yet methinks I ſhould mourn, if, for this cauſe, *you* deſerted me.

I conſider an honeſt, poor, and pious man, in a view of *dignity* and regard, as he claims a more immediate affinity with Heaven. If you, who have underſtanding, and a heart, drop the diſtinction of fortune, and the foppery of life, you will envy that *ſimplicity*, and *reſolution* in the cauſe of virtue, which in great events eclipſe all the worldly ſplendor which ever attracted the eye, or captivated the fancy: For what is *worldly greatneſs*, but the ſhining of a glow-worm, deriving its brightneſs from the dark ſhade that ſurrounds it; whilſt *poverty*, ſupported by a rational confidence, and true faith in God, darts forth rays of glory.

Whether there be any caſe, in which a certain portion of *enthuſiaſm* is of ſervice to mankind, I leave others to determine: you have my full permiſſion to condemn it: I hope you will find my doctrine as gentle as the ſummer's breeze. The dictates of reaſon, and the purity of the heart, are the pedeſtals on which the *faith* of a Chriſtian ſtands: and That which cannot be accompliſhed by means of faith, as it contributes to the happineſs of mankind, we muſt refer to a judgment to come. I am not the leſs your friend, becauſe I make

the poor my object. I hope my appeal to the common-ſenſe of mankind, in defence of religion, will entitle me to your charity.

You are not to imagine I differ much from the reſt of the world: I am not diſintereſted: I aſpire at performing a taſk, which may be acceptable to That righteous Judge of men, before whom you and I muſt equally prepare to ſtand arraigned. Permit me, therefore, to recommend this book to your protection. I tell you my thoughts according to my experience: and I expect more good from the miſtreſs of the family, than from the maſter of it. Men are wont to aſcribe to your ſex, by far the greater degree of *levity*; and in the ſame breath acknowledge that you poſſeſs by much the largeſt portion of *piety*. If this be true, you ſtand at leaſt upon equal ground; for of all kinds of abuſes of reaſon, *impiety* is the moſt ſhocking. If it be true that your ſex really enjoys ſuch a ſuperiority, for ſo I will call it, conſider how you may employ it moſt advantageouſly. Unite all the honeſt arts of female ſoftneſs, with the manly dignity and force of Chriſtian charity; and, by brightening the proſpect of the life to come, you will render your preſent happineſs the more complete.

Example deſcends: the miſtreſs who is beſt taught, will be moſt attentive that her domeſtics ſhall know their duty. What ſecurity can you have in the fidelity of That ſervant, who is unfaithful to her God? The moral world is already in a drooping ſtate: let admonition totally ceaſe, and it will die. Much depends on *your* care! The larger your fortune and connections, and the higher your talents, the greater your charge.—Aſk your own heart if it be not ſo; and for your own ſake, act a conſiſtent part."

Thus might I addreſs a lady, who has ſenſe to diſcover the deſign of this book; candour to treat it with civility; and piety to introduce it, and bring it into reputation.

Caution to the unwary female.

With regard to the innocent country girl, who I ſuppoſe to be the object of her attention, many ſuch come to town to try their fortune. Whilſt *London* loſes ſo vaſt a proportion of infants more than the country, there will be a demand for female domeſtics. I have not the leſs reaſon to believe, that what I have ſaid will be of more uſe to thoſe who may read it,

than

than if I were to hang out a gaudy flag to invite the unwary hither. I believe that many will come, and that a portion of them will fall a ſacrifice: this is a reaſon why we ſhould fight out every inch of ground, not give it up, but contend to the laſt, in maintaining the cauſe of virtue.

Uſe of knowledge of the world.

Although the ſimplicity of *Arcadia* may ſubſiſt only in the *poet's* brain, in the full latitude which it is ſometimes deſcribed: yet there are many who have very honeſt hearts, ſupported by ſtrength of underſtanding. Knowledge of the world ſometimes tempts men to be guilty of perfidy: but it is alſo a neceſſary guard againſt the fatal effects of perfidiouſneſs.

It is a melancholy truth, that in general we are ſtrangely departed from the true ſimplicity of manners, which our Saviour ſays, "of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven:" but ſtill it is to be hoped, we do not all loſe ſight of thoſe generous principles of ſound policy, and true faith, which have for ſo many ages ſecured to us our civil and religious liberties. If, as I have before obſerved, our advances in knowledge, and improvements in arts, commerce, and agriculture, have operated unkindly on our morals, there is the more reaſon for cultivating that purity and ſimplicity, which I now recommend.

Untoward effects of diſputes with the clergy.

The *clergy* and the *laity* often militate againſt each other on account of our improvements. What a ſtrange event! A preacher of the goſpel of peace, and his diſciples, inſtead of being mutually aſſiſting to promote a ſtrict obſervance of the laws of *Chriſt*, breaking out into civil conteſts!—What is to be the fate of religion; or what *our* fate, if we neglect to walk in her ſacred paths?

Reflexion on prayer.

As I attempt throughout my work to maintain, that nothing can demonſtrate the natural greatneſs and dignity of human nature, in all conditions, ſo much as *religion*; and that no part of religion is ſo directly applied to the Deity, as *prayer*; I conclude, that we ought to have God in all our thoughts; or, in other words, not to think on any ſubject, without a reference to his power and influence. In this great view, I have occaſionally introduced *prayers* as *notes*, on ſeveral of the ſubjects which occur, as the moſt ready way to affect the heart, particularly of young

readers; preſuming, that under ſuch impreſſions, they may at once *read*, *meditate*, and *pray*.

Men are but grown children: and whenever we find them untoward, there ſeems to be as much conſiſtency in the enquiry, if *they* have made application to the throne of Heaven for aſſiſtance; as in aſking a child the ſimple queſtion, "Have you ſaid your prayers?"

I know that the negligence of the common people, particularly in theſe cities, is arrived to ſo monſtrous a height, with reſpect both to themſelves and their children, that a boy I had lately occaſion to queſtion, ſaid, "*I never heard of Jeſus Chriſt.*" Whether this was true, or the effect of his wickedneſs in lying, is not ſo eaſy to determine.

I cloſe my book, by a *family devotion* for every day in the week, each day being divided into three parts: the firſt chriſtians, as well as the *Jews*, were wont to pray thrice in the day. I preſume that what is intended for the *morning*, will be the *leaſt* uſed; and therefore *one* part for the ſame day is ſuppoſed to be ſufficient. With regard to the *evening*, the two parts being uſed alternately, make a variety extended to fourteen days.

If the *whole* of every ſuch diviſion were uſed in a family, it would not exceed ten or fifteen minutes. I am ſenſible, that the ſhorteſt prayers are the moſt pleaſing: thoſe which are extended to a great length, rather injure than promote the general cauſe of piety, whatever good they may do to a few individuals.

From this variety I alſo propoſe another advantage, that by ſtanding and ſetting, as well as kneeling, though for the ſhorteſt interval of time, the tired domeſtic may be kept awake; and perhaps by this means worſhip God in ſpirit, as a man, and not merely by genuflection, ſleeping or dozing, like an ox.

For the ſame reaſon, I hope that this method may anſwer the *end propoſed*, better than the more frequent repetition of the ſame *form*. There are, in our *liturgy*, ſuch admirable prayers, the oftener they are repeated, at proper ſeaſons, when the mind is duly diſpoſed, the more devotion they excite. Notwithſtanding which, *variety* has wonderful properties; and *novelty* draws with chains of adamant.

I have

Concluſion.

I have conſidered what human nature is under its various weakneſſes and infirmities; and how to reconcile my own mind to the events of life: this appeared to be the beſt way to communicate inſtruction. I ſhould have taken more time, but life ſeemed to be ebbing out too faſt to admit of delay.

As it now ſtands, it may be deemed, even at a gentleman's price, too dear a book for thoſe it was *at firſt* principally intended. This defect is eaſily ſupplied by the pious maſter or miſtreſs: if it be worthy of their own peruſal, they will recommend it to their ſervants. I mean to devote the produce to the ſervice of the indigent, in order that it may be hereafter reduced to one *octavo*, or at leaſt a *quarto volume*, leaving out ſuch parts as the moſt judicious ſhall think uſeleſs or improper. Thus it may be rendered a ſyſtem of *village ethics*, which, with all its imperfections, may be more complete for the purpoſe, than any thing of the kind that I have any knowledge of.

Jan. 1774.

J. H.

DIALOGUES

Moral and Religious Inſtruction:

WITH

Anecdotes, Characters, and Deſcriptions,

RELATING TO

The Lives and Deaths of many Perſons.

PART I.

Moral and Religious Instruction:

WITH

Anecdotes, Characters, and Descriptions,

RELATING TO

The Lives and Deaths of many Persons.

PART I.

DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

THOMAS TRUEMAN, a Farmer, and his Daughter MARY,

On ſeveral intereſting SUBJECTS.

WEEK I.

FRIDAY.

CONVERSATION I.

Introduction.

T. WELL, my dear *Mary*, thou haſt ſeen the good lady.

M. Yes: and I ſhall be glad if ſhe will accept of my ſervice, and receive me under her care and protection.

T. Come: ſit thee down; I have *much* to ſay to thee, if my heart is not too full. I thought a little while ago, I ſhould have parted with thee, by taking a far journey, but for the preſent heaven has ordered otherwiſe: The time is coming on faſt when I *muſt* go! Thy dear mother is gone before me: Doſt thou know what ſhe ſaid when ſhe died? Her laſt words were, *O be careful of my daughter!* More ſhe would have ſaid, but her heart ſwelled up too high.

Danger to children by the early death of parents.

M. O my father!

T. Be comforted, my child! She hath left me to act for her, and happy it may be for thee that I live: young women,

when left parentleſs, are ſo much at their own diſpoſal, they often diſpoſe of themſelves very badly.

M. I hope, my father, you will live till I am *old* myſelf, if it pleaſe God that I live ſo long; and I ſhall always preſerve the memory of my dear mother with gratitude and reſpect.

Parting with children.

T. Methinks, *Mary*, a ſeparation after *ſeventeen* years tender acquaintance with thee, even from thy birth, is like parting with the blood that ſtreams through my heart, eſpecially as thou art going into a world thou art not ſo well acquainted with as I am. Believe me, it is a *bad world!*

M. I hope it is not all ſo bad as ſome people imagine.

T. No: thy choice of *good* or *bad* depends on thyſelf; whether thou wilt depart from the *good* thou haſt been taught, and turn aſide to *evil*; or, in ſpite of the flatteries of ſin, cleave with all thy heart to the virtuous ſide.

M. Be aſſured, my Father, that I am reſolved to *live honeſtly*, and to do my duty to my miſtreſs.

T. Mary, we are met to talk over matters ſeriouſly: whatever I ſhall ſay to thee, thou muſt conſider as the effect of my love for thee. Thou knoweſt not how dear thou art to me: but underſtand, my daughter, that whilſt I indulge my anxious wiſhes to preſerve thee, I conſult my own happineſs in this life, and brighten my proſpect of the life to come. So hath the wiſdom of the Almighty ordained, that good intentions, and good actions, ſhould ever be ſelf-rewarded!—Remember, *Mary*, thou haſt a Father beſides me, far greater and better, to whoſe care I recommend thee: I hope he will protect thee: If thou art faithful to *him*, he will never forſake *thee! O God, preſerve my child; keep her from preſumptuous ſins; cleanſe her from thoſe ſecret faults which cleave to our imperfect nature, and make her acceptable to thee, whom I have ſought to ſerve, by breeding her up in thy fear.*

Recommending children to God.

M. Thank you, my dear Father!——I hope I ſhall behave myſelf in ſuch a manner, as to become an object of that mercy which you are ſo good to beg for me with ſo much earneſtneſs, fully perſuaded as I am, that it will not be your fault if it proves otherwiſe.

T. I truſt, my daughter, that thou wilt be always ſo virtuouſly

truoufly inclined, as to lay a good foundation of happineſs in both worlds.

M. What is the beſt means of doing this?

T. To live in a conſtant remembrance that *God* is preſent wherever thou art; that he *ſees* all thy *actions*, *knows* all thy *thoughts*, *hears* all thy *words*, and regiſters them, ſo that from the beginning to the end of time, nothing which relates to any of us can eſcape his knowledge. *Deſign of religion.*

M. I am perfectly convinced of this, and will endevor to exerciſe myſelf in ſuch virtues as I truſt will be pleaſing to my *heavenly Father*.

T. We know from the revelation of the will of God, as well as from the conviction of our own minds, that he is *juſt* and *merciful*; *wiſe* and *good* to us, without end.

M. All things before my eyes convince me that there is an Almighty Power which made and rules the *whole world*, whilſt my own conſcience tells me that I am accountable to the God that made *me*.

T. Many of the ways of his providence, *Mary*, are now beyond our reach; yet as we believe in a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments *after death*, we may reconcile all the evil which happens in the world. We ſee his *juſtice* and his *mercy*, his *wiſdom* and his *goodneſs* laid open in the moſt wonderful, and yet in the cleareſt manner, by ſending his Son into a world over-run with wickedneſs, to ſave it from deſtruction. *Our Saviour* has ſhewn us the *heinouſneſs of ſin*, by making an atonement for it by his blood!

M. I have often thought that religion has nothing in it that can diſturb or perplex thoſe who have any ſenſe and are humble; or who wiſh to forſake their ſins, and do their duty.

T. Why doſt thou think ſo?

M. It is very plain that Chriſt has left us an *example* to be followed, and a *law* to be obeyed; and he hath promiſed a crown of immortal glory, if we follow his example and obey his laws, as well as we can.

T. True, my dear *Mary*; and thou mayeſt be equally aſſured, that in both caſes, God requires neither more nor leſs than is proper for our happineſs, for this ſure reaſon, that

he is infinitely *wiſe* as well as *good*. And for the reſt, we muſt appeal to our own hearts.——But where doſt thou find this law?

M. I find it in my New Teſtament: and I truſt in the *conditions* of the *mercy* there offered, and that God will take me under his care and protection.

T. Haſt thou conſidered that if thou art really obedient to God, thou wilt never forget to *pray* to him? That thou mayeſt not want a ſupply of uſeful meditations, I give thee this little book *(a)*: it may prove a *treaſure* to thee, if thou makeſt a proper uſe of it. Theſe prayers and ſupplications are the language of my heart, when happily I addreſs the Almighty, to whom we ought to appeal in prayer, and beg his aſſiſtance on every occaſion *(b)*. As to this book, I would have thee conſider, that whatever may be neceſſary for the preſervation of the body, ſo much as the ſoul is the moſt valuable part, the brighter will thoſe ſhine in the realms of eternal day, who are inſtrumental in teaching others how to avoid the miſeries of everlaſting darkneſs.

M. Be aſſured, my father, that I will ſhew you my gratitude *for this preſent*, by making a proper uſe of it. And I think that charity to the *ſoul*, is, without compariſon, greater than to the *body*: But I ſuppoſe that real charity extends to both.

T. Moſt certainly: but tell me, *Mary*, whether thou art exerciſed in *religious* duties, in ſupport of the ſoul or body, what wouldſt thou ſay of religion in general, if any one ſhould aſk thee what thy notions of it are?

M. I ſhould anſwer, it is to worſhip God, and obey his commandments.

T. Thou anſwereſt well. Do this, and thou wilt do *juſtice*; ſhew *mercy*; and walk *humbly* with thy God. This is the

(a) A great part of the Manual of Devotion at the end of this Book, is collected from the Liturgy, and the whole adapted to the uſe of families.

(b) Many of the Prayers, which were in the Book of Prayers, in the former edition of this work, are now inſerted, with ſome alterations, as *notes* to the heads they immediately relate to.

the *ſubſtance* of religion! My maſter, whom I ſerved in my younger days, uſed to give this character of religion: "That it is the knowledge of the moſt excellent truths; the contemplation of the moſt glorious objects; the hope of the moſt raviſhing pleaſures, and the practice of ſuch duties as are moſt ſerviceable to our happineſs."

M. According to this deſcription, nothing upon earth is equal to *religion*. But, pray, my Father, what is *happineſs*, which ſo many talk about, and ſo few ſeem to underſtand?

T. The reaſon why ſo few clearly underſtand what they mean, is, that they do not exerciſe themſelves in ſuch *virtues* as conſtitute a great part of happineſs. *Man is immortal*, and we ſhould conſider him as a Being related to both worlds.—Our notions of happineſs depend partly on our education, and our inſtruction concerning *good* and *evil:* in general we may call it *contentment*, *reputation*, *proſperity*, and *peace of mind:* this depends on *virtue*, and proves that *virtue* and *happineſs* are not to be *ſeparated*. In the compoſition of happineſs, I think we muſt add *liberty*; not only That liberty which depends on the laws of our country, but ſuch as conſiſts in conforming to the laws of *righteouſneſs*, wherein is perfect freedom. Thoſe who are ſlaves to ſin, are ſlaves of the very worſt kind, and the moſt eſtranged from happineſs, their conſciences being led in chains. Whether thou liveſt in proſperity or adverſity, ſtrive to maintain *this liberty:* entreat the Almighty to accept thy prayers, and aſſiſt thee *(a)*, for without aſſiſtance thou canſt not be happy. The proper uſe of this book may help to guide thee in the paths of religion, and conſequently in the road to happineſs. We ſhall talk more on this ſubject hereafter: let me *firſt* inform thee of the things which belong to happineſs.

M. I am truly ſenſible of the great importance and advantage of *prayer*, to prevent us from going aſtray, and creat-

General motive to prayer.

(a) O God the fountain of happineſs, and ſure defence of all that put their truſt in thee, mercifully accept the prayers which I offer; and becauſe through the weakneſs of my nature, I can do no *good thing without thee*, grant me thy helping grace, that I may diligently keep thy commandments, and evermore pleaſe thee both in will and deed, through Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

creating our own miſery: but I beg you will inform me concerning the reaſons which moſt intereſt your own mind in regard to prayer.

T. Whether I look up to heaven, or down upon the earth, when my thoughts are not diſſipated like the thoughts of a child, I find reaſons without end to *adore* my *Maker!* We are *Chriſtians*, and live in a moſt enlightened age; we ſhould triumph in that glorious name, and not, by our negligence, prove ourſelves to be more fooliſh or ſinful, than the leſs civilized parts of the earth. By whatever name or attributes diſtinguiſhed, all nations worſhip a God: Even Savages acknowledge the goodneſs, and adore the power of the One Supreme: They know he is viſible only in his works, and theſe they contemplate with wonder. My good maſter, who had lived many years in foreign lands, often took notice to his friends, how religion influences the mind of man. We are *all* the work of *one God!* and what doſt thou think was the *end* he propoſed in making ſuch creatures as we are?

M. I preſume he intended his own glory, and our happineſs.

T. True: but if we do not turn to him, as to a merciful and tender Father, but perſiſt in *ſinning* againſt him, doſt thou not think he will be glorified by his *juſtice* in our ſufferings?

M. I believe he will; and I think we cannot avoid ſinning, if we do not worſhip God.

T. The indolence which leads many to neglect their prayers, or to ſay them in a thoughtleſs manner, is of itſelf a great ſin. What is it people are afraid of? There is no bodily labor in the diſcharge of the duty of prayer, unleſs it is ſpun out beyond meaſure, which it never ought to be. *All rational exerciſes* of religion would be highly pleaſing to us as *rational creatures*, were we not a degenerate race of mortals. God never made any *reaſonable* creatures ſhy of his company, and averſe to his will. *Birds* and *beaſts*, and all the reſt of creation that has life, ſeem to act according to their nature; and when left to themſelves, purſue their own good; but when *man* neglects to worſhip his Maker, he ſeems to forget himſelf entirely, and ſhews the corruption of his

nature,

nature, and his departure from what he was originally made. Is it not wonderful that any of us ſhould be *inſenſible* of the *gracious* and awful preſence of God! The continuance of his bleſſings towards us are not only neceſſary to our *ſucceſs*, but alſo to our being. To be unmindful of him, ſhews want of ſenſe, as well as of piety.——But tell me, *Mary*, when *thou* falleſt on thy knees, doſt thou recollect to whom thou art addreſſing thy prayers?

M. Don't we all pray to God?

T. Yes; but doſt thou then conſider God as a Spirit preſent with thee, infinitely wiſe and merciful, great and good, the author of thy life, thy tender Father, and thy almighty Preſerver?

M. I am ſure I ought to do ſo, and will endevor to awaken myſelf to a due ſenſe of ſuch conſiderations: Pray what means do *you* uſe to keep up in your mind a right ſenſe of them?

The glories of creation diſplayed.

T. I endevor to regulate all my thoughts, words, and actions, ſo as to be *pleaſing* to God, and to avoid what I apprehend will be *offenſive* to him. To this end I turn my mind to the contemplation of his *works*. When I go into my fields, I look up with joy towards the heavens as my native land, to which I hope, ere long, I ſhall be removed. I conſider it as the place where only I can fill up the meaſure of my longings after happineſs. I ſurvey the vaſt tremendous height, but can only wonder and adore the Creator!—When I riſe to go to work, I behold the glorious appearance of the *ſun*, and conſider it as "a marvellous inſtrument of the work of the moſt High." When I behold its effects ſhewn by the day-light, I rejoice;—when I conſider it as the means whereby my blood circulates in my veins, and gives motion to my pulſe and heart, I am ready to fall down in gratitude and praiſe, not to the *ſun*, but to *Him* that made the *ſun*, and rules its power! This is the inſtrument which gives life, even to the *clod of earth*, making the grain to ſhoot from its boſom, and in due time bringing it to maturity, for the uſe of man. Were it kept bound in the winter's froſt, I need not tell thee that my labor in *ſowing* would be loſt.—Can'ſt thou ſurvey the beauty of the heavens

and

and the clear firmament, or conſider whoſe *handy-work* it is, without gratitude and wonder?

M. I am ſenſible that theſe things can come only from God; but I have not yet conſidered them, as I now find I ought to have done. I fear many are childiſh in this reſpect.

T. O my daughter, we are not *childiſh* only, but *perverſe!* and what is ſtill more ſtrange, our ſuperiors are, in many reſpects, as fooliſh and inſenſible as ourſelves. But I would not have thee imagine they deny the truth in their words: there are but few ſo wicked——but their minds being diſordered by evil habits, and their hearts by corrupt inclinations, they follow the things they condemn, and conſulting the *preſent moment* only, neglect their *eternal intereſt.*

M. Is it not wonderful that ſuch people, knowing ſo much better, ſhould be ſo faulty? Methinks they ſhould be *puniſhed*, to bring them to the right way.

T. Puniſhed they are by their own diſturbed minds; but take thou heed, my daughter, not to be raſh in conſigning others to puniſhment; thou knoweſt not yet what thine own heart is, nor how prone it may be to folly and iniquity. No one can ſay what the heart is capable of conceiving, nor what wickedneſs it may bring forth! Learn to mourn over the crimes, as well as the misfortunes which thou ſeeſt in the world, that whilſt thou endevoreſt to ſhun them, thou mayſt hope to find the more mercy for thine own guilt and infirmities.

Behold the *mercy*, as well as the *power* of God, diſplayed in his conduct towards man! Contemplate every object before thee: let *theſe* teach thee to obey *his* laws, who rules the heavens and the earth, the appearances of which are ſo full of delight and wonder. Conſider the various ſeaſons of the year: do not the *ſpring* and *ſummer* tranſport thee with the ſinging of birds, the verdure of the earth, the refreſhing breeze, and the gentle ſtream? To uſe the beautiful language of the ſacred writings, canſt thou look on the *rainbow*, and not praiſe him that *made* it? Very beautiful it is in the brightneſs thereof: it compaſſeth the heavens about with a glorious circle, and the hand of the moſt High hath

bended it."—Haſt thou not conſidered how often the *ſhowers* refreſh the earth, when it is weary with drought, and as they fall, bring with them marrow and fatneſs, to cheer the hearts of men and beaſts?—The *ſnow* alſo bringeth plenty on the earth by the *manure* contained in it. "As birds flying, the Almighty ſcattereth it, and the falling down thereof is as the lighting of graſshoppers: the eye marvelleth at the beauty of the whiteneſs thereof, and the heart is aſtoniſhed at the raining of it." And with regard to the awful ſounds from the heavens, haſt thou never heard, with *religious reverence*, though I hope with *no childiſh fears*, the noiſe of *thunder* and *ſtorms*, which make this globe of earth, as it were, to tremble? And when the *lightnings* come with *aſtoniſhing ſwiftneſs*, art thou not ſtruck with an awe which demands thy obedience, and obliges thee to cry out, *Great, O Lord, and wonderful are thy works!*

M. O, my Father, you have *often* talked of theſe things, but I was too young or too careleſs to think of them in the manner I ought to have done. I now feel my mind enlarged: I am fully convinced of my duty, and I hope I ſhall never forget what you ſay.

T. Many of thy elders, *Mary*, are thoughtleſs: but do thou rather forget that it is day or night, than not remember thy Creator, *now in the days of thy youth.* The day and night equally declare his glory and his power: when the ſun riſes and when it ſets, doſt thou not ſee the finger of God? When thou retireſt at night to refreſh thy wearied limbs, conſider every *ſtar* hung out as a lamp to ſhew his marvellous works!—Conſider, that *he* alſo made the *moon* "to ſerve in her ſeaſon" (as the months roll round) "for a declaration of *time*," and a ſign that *time* itſelf will have an end.—All theſe wonders in the heavens remain in no leſs aſtoniſhing order, "and never faint in their watches." They move at the commandment of the moſt High, and without his wiſe and incomprehenſible direction, *we* mortals could not exiſt. We ſhould be devoured by fire, drowned in water, or chilled to death by cold. Thou, my child, wouldeſt fall like a leaf in autumn, even in the ſpring and bloom of thy life. Well may we wonder and ſay, "when we conſider

the *heavens*, the work of thy fingers, O God, the *moon* and the *ſtars* which *thou* haſt ordained; what is *man* that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man that thou regardeſt him!" Yet ſo it is, *we* alſo are the work of *his* hands, and he formed us to worſhip and adore him! Learn, then, to be *good*, not by *belief* only, but by *practice*, and a conſtant habit of thinking, that *God is all in all!*—"When thou glorifieſt the Lord, exalt him as much as thou canſt, for *he will ever far exceed*; and *when* thou exalteſt him, put forth *all thy ſtrength and be not weary.*" Our *praiſe* is grateful though it be weak—O, my daughter, believe me *He is all in all!* "He hath made all things, and to the *godly* he hath given wiſdom." Thus do our *reaſon* and our *faith* inſtruct us: Thus do our *ſenſes* lead us by the hand; and *blind* are thoſe who do not ſee the glory of God diſplayed in his works; and *deaf*, when they will not hear that perſuaſive voice, which invites us with the kindneſs of friendſhip and the tenderneſs of love, to be *good* and *happy!*

SATURDAY.

SATURDAY.

CONVERSATION II.

I AM glad, my Father, that we are met again. I have thought of nothing but our converſation of laſt night. When I retired to ſleep, the ſtars ſhone brighter than I ever ſaw them: all around me was ſilent as the grave, and yet my mind was ſo compoſed, methought I heard ſweet harmony. Such was the effect of what you told me! And this morning when I aroſe, the brightneſs of the ſun made an awful impreſſion on me. This glorious fire in the heavens not only cheer'd my body with its warmth, but inſpir'd my mind with *devotion*.

Good effects of pious converſation.

T. Happy ſhall I be, my dear *Mary*, if I ſee thee *act* with ſo juſt a ſenſe of things.

M. Pray, my Father, how would you wiſh I ſhould frame my mind to ſhew forth, in my poor perſon, that glory of God, which you ſay belongs to us mortals?

T. It muſt be obvious to thee, that *man* is more diſtinguiſhed from the *beaſts*, by *devotion* than by *reaſon*; for the inſtinct of a beaſt, as thou mayeſt have often obſerved in my dogs and horſes and other brutes, in many inſtances reſembles reaſon, but they do not appear to have the leaſt inclination to *devotion* in any thing they do: on the contrary, we are told, not to be as the *beaſts that periſh*; or in other words, the beaſts that are not *accountable*, becauſe they are not *immortal*. *We* feel in our minds a natural tendency to devotion: *gratitude* for any unexpected good fortune, *fear* in any danger of evil, *hope* in any good, all lead us to ſeek an inviſible power, inſomuch that we are ſure our ſouls are related to God. And if we believe in his *works*, *and how can we reſiſt believing in what we ſee*, we muſt believe in *him*: and if we believe in him, as the great Author and Preſerver of all things, it is contrary to our common ſenſe of juſtice

Nature of prayer.

and gratitude to refrain from worſhiping him; and the more truly we do *worſhip* him, the more we ſhew forth his glory *(a)*. Thou muſt be ſenſible that *prayer* is the means of intercourſe between our heavenly Father and our own hearts, and it is impoſſible to worſhip him but in *ſpirit*, or to do it acceptably, but as truth directs us. This is ſo agreeable to the common ſenſe of mankind, that it is very eaſy to underſtand why the mere offering of words, in which the heart hath no ſhare, ſhould be called the *ſacrifice of fools, who conſider not that they do evil.*

M. I am ſenſible that prayer is our ſureſt recourſe in difficulty and danger; but do all people think it abſolutely neceſſary to their well being?

T. All people ſhould think it ſo; for "though we are endued with faculties which enable us clearly to *underſtand* the obligation lying upon us, to obey conſtantly the will of God, yet we are at the ſame time encompaſſed with ſuch *weakneſſes*, as make us ſtand in need of perpetual *aſſiſtance*, to enable us to live up in any tolerable manner to the obligations we are under." Upon this undeniable principle, is founded the duty of prayer, as one of the cleareſt dictates of ſelf-love, and true regard to our own intereſt.

M. What do the *learned* men ſay concerning it?

T. That's more than I can tell thee; but all *good* men ſeem to be agreed. Archbiſhop SHARP tells us, "*Prayer* ought to be the continual exerciſe of life, for it is to the ſoul, what meat and drink are to our bodies, their *repaſt*, their *ſupport*, their *nouriſhment*. *Prayer* is the great univerſal inſtrument by which we fetch down bleſſings from above, and become poſſeſſed of whatever we want. *Prayer* is our defence

(a) For humility and devotion.

O Almighty Lord of heaven, before whom all creatures bow; I adore thy perfections, and admire thy *wonderful works*. I proſtrate myſelf with reverence before thee, and praiſe thy name with joy. Humble me in thy ſight, O God, and give me a ſincere and contrite heart; that having a juſt ſenſe of my dependance on thy providence, and a fervent zeal in thy ſervice, I may offer up the incenſe of my prayers to thee, in an acceptable manner, through Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

fence and preſervative againſt ſin, and againſt temptation. It is the ſecurity of our virtue, and the moſt efficacious means to advance it. *Prayer* is the wings of our ſouls, whereby we raiſe ourſelves up above this lower world to the God above, with whom, while we converſe, we become the more transformed into his nature. Whatever anticipations of heaven there be on earth; whatever foretaſtes we chriſtians have in theſe bodies, of the happineſs of eternity, they are all brought about by the means of prayer." So ſays this pious archbiſhop.

M. Have any *chriſtians* ever attempted to contradict him in this opinion?

T. None that I know of; but there are numbers who neglect their prayers, and thou wilt ſee many *bad* examples to one *good* one, and therefore ſhouldſt be as much guarded as if people were mad enough to diſpute this point.

M. Is it beſt to pray from our *heads* and *hearts*, without any ſet form of prayer?

T. Some pretend that it is: but I think there is a neceſſity of obſerving a *form*. The great Sovereign of the world having commanded us to worſhip him in *truth* as well as in ſpirit, and it requiring great ſtrength of mind to *find words proper to be uttered* whilſt we are actually praying, *forms of prayer* are conſidered by our church as neceſſary: thou mayſt obſerve that none of the prayers in the *liturgy* are *long*, and it is very obvious that the ſhorter and more ſimple prayers are, the more eaſily the underſtanding and the heart can keep pace, and mutually aſſiſt each other. There is a vaſt variety of modes of worſhip now prevailing in the earth, and my maſter told me, they are all diſtinguiſhed from each other by ſome *form* or words of addreſs to God, as if there could not be any ſolid plan of devotion conſiſtent in its ſeveral parts, and reduced to common uſe, without this aſſiſtance. Though ſome who diſſent from our church do not directly acknowledge this, yet they diſcover how eaſily men run into extravagancies witnout them. Thou knoweſt that it is the *duty of our clergy* to pray according to a form directed by *our Common Prayer-Book*. Our Saviour himſelf hath given us a *form*, but he never ſaid we ſhould uſe no other.

Neceſſity of forms of prayer.

M. Are

M. Are not ſome perſons capable of praying in words they have not meditated before?

Yes: I believe ſome few are able: but if we conſider mankind in general, the want of forms is dangerous to the true intereſt of piety: Much prophaneneſs of expreſſion, much hypocriſy and enthuſiaſm, have been occaſioned by the want of forms. *Reaſon* being the great prerogative of human nature, and the uſe of it our *glory*, as well as our *duty*, above all things it is neceſſary to make *rational offerings to God:* And if we mean that our petitions ſhould be rational, they muſt be expreſſed in words proper to ſpeak to the Almighty, the meaning whereof is *clearly comprehended*; and though we generally adhere to *ſcriptural expreſſions*, theſe ſhould be duly conſidered: in ſome caſes they muſt be *varied*, in order to render our prayers plain and ſimple, yet not wanting in dignity of expreſſion. The wiſe man ſays, "Before thou prayeſt, *prepare* thyſelf, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord." What is this but to conſider the words we are going to utter, as well as to ſay them from the heart.

M. For my own part, I am ſatisfied when I find words already fitted to my own circumſtances: but I beg you will inform me how to diſtinguiſh the different kinds of prayer.

T. I know but of two branches of devotion, *ſupplication* and *praiſe:* The *firſt* is the *confeſſion of ſin and miſery*, and petition for relief, which comprehends *repentance*; the *laſt* is an *angelical* and heavenly duty. The diſtinction thou mayſt perceive is obvious, but not ſo often made as it ſhould be, and the reaſon is but too plain; few people are ſufficiently attentive to their prayers. They too often utter words, when they do not think of *God*, and therefore cannot be ſaid to *pray*. It is a horrible practice to addreſs the Almighty, and at the ſame time to be totally abſent, and inattentive to the meaning of the words we utter.

Condition of life as relating to prayer.

The tender Father of mankind has ordered things to hang in a wonderful chain and connection. We pray to him becauſe of our wants and neceſſities of body and ſoul: he hears our prayers when we make them, if we are equally conſcious of our inability and unworthineſs as well as of our neceſſities.

And with what zeal, humility, and attention ought we to worſhip ſo glorious a Being as God! *(a)*

M. Is Prayer really as neceſſary to the *ſoul*, as food to the *body?*

T. So it ſeems: the whole life of a *good man* is one continual prayer, not that he ſpends more time on his knees than his condition permits, and good habits require, but *God* is in all his *thoughts*; and all his *words* and *actions* are regulated by the rules of religion.—Conſider, *Mary*, the ſtate of human life, and the dangers which ſurround thee, and all the children of men.

M. I am ſenſible that we are all ſubject every day, and every hour, to pain and ſorrow, ſickneſs and death; and ſhould live prepared for whatever a day may bring forth.

T. True: but we are ſubject to a greater evil than theſe: we are ſubject to *ſin*, and therefore ſhould pray againſt it; and whilſt we think we ſtand, take heed leſt we fall. Thou art ſure that life muſt end in a few uncertain years: it is impoſſible, being in thy right mind, that thou ſhouldſt not be anxious what is to *become of thee*, that is of thy *ſoul*. Eternity is a pleaſing or a dreadful thought, according as we live. The proſpect of it is always before us; and we are all perſuaded *that we have ſouls*, and *believe* they will be *ſaved* or *damned*.

M. I find

(a) For attention to prayer, and a happy iſſue to the end and deſign of it.

Almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, to whoſe command all nature is obedient, and before whom *angels* fall down in humble adoration: aſſiſt *me*, I beſeech thee, that I may worſhip thee with an active, pure, and unſpotted mind. Let the contemplation of thy boundleſs mercies wipe the tears from my eyes, and fill my heart with gladneſs. Let my *heart* and my *words* unite, that my prayers may bring health and comfort to my ſoul. Make me *patient* and reſigned to thee, under all temporal evils, that I may look up to the glory which ſhall be revealed, when my *corrupt* body ſhall put on *incorruption*: And grant, O Lord, by thy mercy and almighty power, that I may reach thoſe happy mansions where millions proſtrate themſelves before the glories of thy throne, and ſhine as the ſtars of heaven. This I beg, O Almighty Father of Life, for the ſake of thy beloved Son, who died for mankind that they might *live for ever!* Amen.

M. I find it natural to be in *hope* or *fear* of *ſomething*; and I ſuppoſe that every one who believes in a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, muſt have *hopes* and *fears* beyond the grave. But what ſhall I do, my Father, to remove the pain of my fears, and render my hopes joyful?

Reſolution derived from prayer.

T. What can'ſt thou do my child, but apply thine heart and underſtanding, all thy mind, and all thy ſtrength, to *God?* Conſider how thou may'ſt moſt *gracefully* and moſt *willingly* reſign thyſelf to whatever ſhall pleaſe him, always hoping for the beſt, ſo long as thou doſt thy duty, and prayeſt to him to help thy endevors. But the happineſs of life depends ſo much on prayer, that I ſee not how we can otherwiſe render our minds firm, bold, and determined, and look on life and death indifferently. This it was which enabled ſo many perſons, recorded in the ſcriptures, and other hiſtories of the greateſt authority, to triumph even in death, ſubmitting chearfully to the torture, when the cauſe of religion called on them to maintain the *truth*, and ſeal it with their blood.

M. Do you recollect any inſtance of extraordinary reſolution of an Engliſh woman?

T. Engliſh! Mary! why, they are the braveſt people in the world, *men* and *women*. I remember to have heard my maſter ſpeak of a Mrs. *Aſkew (a)*, a ſingle young gentlewoman, about the beginning of the Reformation, or change from the errors of Popery. This lady was cruelly perſecuted. She was impriſoned for her faith, and though importuned by the firſt people in the nation to recant what they called her errors, ſhe would not conform to *popiſh opinions*, and was at length condemned to the torture, to draw from her who it was that befriended her: but ſhe maintained her conſtancy, and at length was brought to the ſtake at *Smithfield* in *London*, and burnt; and, like a primitive Chriſtian, ſhe died, *praying for her murderers*.

M. Had ſhe committed no crime?

T. None: ſhe was a very good young woman: good even to death.

M. Did

(a) The phyſicians, Dr. Aſkew, of Newcaſtle, and his ſon, the Dr. in London, are of the ſame family.

M. Did the king at that time ſhew her any mercy?

T. Henry VIII. would have pardoned her at the ſtake, if ſhe would have recanted, but he was ſtill too much a papiſt to do it without; and Mrs. *Aſkew*, at the age of 25, died a martyr to the proteſtant faith.

M. Surely ſuch a reſolution could ariſe from nothing but her hopes in a life to come.

T. And what doſt thou think was the foundation of ſuch hopes? She was habituated *to pray to God*, and to ſerve him boldly in true faithfulneſs and fear. In the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, and in various perſecutions which befel the profeſſors of the goſpel, many oppoſed themſelves to flames and the ſevereſt tortures in the cauſe of truth, and women behaved with as intrepid a mind as the braveſt men.

M. I am afraid that few of this age would have had the reſolution of Mrs. *Aſkew*, for many are aſhamed of being ſeen on their knees.

T. Many a miſtake proceeds from a right principle not rightly underſtood. This is the caſe of ſome good perſons; but a falſe ſhame is apt to betray the cauſe of devotion. When people are *afraid* or *aſhamed* of doing what is in itſelf *right*, they are in great danger of doing *wrong*. Reſolution is ſo neceſſary to religion, that it cannot exiſt without it.

M. I never conſidered before the neceſſity of reſolution to a pious and virtuous life. But I now ſee clearly that nothing truly *great* can be done without it.

T. My dear *Mary*, it is our part to poſſeſs our ſouls with *ſuch a degree of reſolution*, that as no *fear of pain* ſhould *frighten*, *no temptation to pleaſure* ſhould entice us from our duty. It is this habit which gives a luſtre to all our actions, and over-balances or conquers all the gilded charms of pomp, and the allurements of vice; and thou wilt hereafter experience that the degree of thy virtue will be proportionable to the degree of thy *courage* and reſolution.

M. I believe thoſe who are in earneſt, conſtantly pray frequently, as well as fervently, at certain ſtated hours.

T. I have heard my maſter ſay, that in ſome *Mahommedan* countries where he had lived, the people pray at leaſt *thrice* in

Stated hours of prayer.

in the day at regular times, and are no more reſerved in regard to their being *ſeen* at their private worſhip, than at their dinner; ſo much do *they* eſteem *prayer* as a *manly* and *rational*, as well as a *religious* duty.—The *Jews*, I am alſo told, pray thrice in the day. In ſome popiſh countries, the people pray openly in the evening at the *ringing of a bell*, falling down on their knees even in the ſtreets. Some alſo pray before images ſet up in niches in the walls, and make their cities ring with noiſe.

M. You do not mean, however, to recommend ſuch practices.

T. No: thanks to heaven for our *true belief in Chriſt*; we uſe no ſuch *outward ſhew*, nor practice any ſuch abominable idolatry; *we*, in this happy land, pray *in ſecret*, except in our *churches*, or at *chriſtenings* and *burials*: As to *family prayer*, I conſider this alſo as ſecret. We are *commanded* by our great Lord and Maſter, to pray *in ſecret*, that we may not be ſeen of *men*; that is, not to *ſeek* the eyes of men, as the *Phariſees* did. Thou remembereſt our Saviour expreſsly mentions the *groſs hypocriſy* of that people in his time: But let us underſtand the meaning of our Lord, and not become ſo fearful and reſerved, as not to pray at all, which has been often the conſequence of childiſh fears. Suppoſe two perſons met together, both well inclined, yet timorous, and both, on that account, declining this duty; how unhappy it will be for them! How will the ſenſe of religion be leſſened in their hearts by degrees! If they fall into a cuſtom of *never praying* but at church, can it be expected they will be attentive to their prayers *there*: and can they pray at church without being *ſeen*? It is our duty to avoid all human eyes in private, and *we* are accuſtomed to this reſerve: but we ought to be ſo intent in this great buſineſs, and ſo manly in our devotion, as not to regard any interruption or ſurprize, much leſs any trifling accident of being ſeen by one, whoſe eyes we did not ſeek.

M. Pray, how did my mother act in this particular?

T. Thy mother, good as ſhe was, could not immediately get the better of that modeſty which made it ſeem criminal in her eyes to be ſeen on her knees, even by me;

but

but I ſoon convinced her, that as we retired to reſt, and roſe at the ſame hour, ſo we ſhould likewiſe offer up the incenſe of our prayers with one heart and one ſoul; and this contributed greatly to our mutual peace and ſecurity.

M. Do you imagine that all huſbands and wives obſerve the ſame practice?

T. All that I can ſay in anſwer to this is, that happy are thoſe pairs who aſſiſt one another in this reſpect, and who excite and promote each others devotion by friendly advice and lively example.

M. Is it poſſible to have as much *pleaſure* in devotion, as we uſually have in ſome other purſuits?

T. I hope ſo; otherwiſe it ſeems to be abſurd when we worſhip, to ſay, *Let us heartily rejoice in the ſtrength of our ſalvation.* We cannot heartily rejoice without being pleaſed. And the more pleaſure we receive, the leſs ſubject we ſhall be to forget or neglect our devotions. Indeed I ſee not how reaſonable and accountable beings, formed by nature for the worſhip of God, can paſs their days *with pleaſure*, or *without pain*, unleſs they are duly mindful of that God who is the center of happineſs, and the ſummit of joy.

M. What is *pleaſure*, as it reſpects the mind in this inſtance?

T. The thought of doing and thinking what is acceptable to our great Creator. Of all pleaſures, what can gratify the mind ſo much as that of ſending up our *complaints*, our *petitions*, and our *praiſe* to God, every morning and every night? What greater joy can enter thy heart, than the conſciouſneſs of having performed this duty in a proper manner; and when it is ſo done, that *God hath heard thee*, and graciouſly taken thee under his immediate care and protection? Such conduct ſeems to put the *world* under our feet, and to raiſe us towards heaven.

M. I underſtand perfectly what you ſay, and have frequently entertained a particular ſatisfaction in my *prayers*.

T. Our prayers, *Mary*, are our true and faithful friends, who will never forſake us! They are our *guardian angels!* We may enjoy the happineſs and advantage of their company

in a *palace* or a *dungeon*; without their aid, we can have no ſecurity that we ſhall be *conſtant* to *God*, or ſubmit to the laws of Chriſt. *Seek* for the mercy of God, my daughter, and thou mayſt expect to *find* it: but remember, that the promiſe of our *finding*, depends on our *ſeeking*. "The prayer of the *humble* pierceth the clouds, and till he come nigh, he will not be comforted." This is not ſaid particularly of *public* or *private* devotion; for it is ſuppoſed that the ſame warmth and ſincerity accompanies both. To *pierce the clouds* with our prayers, is a very ſtrong and beautiful expreſſion. When they go forth from the heart with fervent importunity, they ſeem to take heaven by violence; they make their way to the ears of the Almighty upon his throne, and bring down comfort and joy to the mind of man. And amidſt all the buſtle of the world, and pretenſions to happineſs, *I conſider that perſon as the happieſt of the children of men, whoſe addreſſes to God, both in public and private, are the moſt acceptable!*

M. Does not our *readineſs* to pray, depend very much on the good habits of our lives?

T. Moſt certainly: they act reciprocally on each other. The good habit of thy thoughts, words, and actions, will grow with thy daily practice in the duty of prayer. On the other hand, ſhouldſt thou ever forſake the paths of virtue, thou wilt as certainly forſake thy prayers, and thy inclinations to all goodneſs will daily decreaſe with thy neglect. Of this I have known numberleſs ſad and deplorable inſtances.—Heaven preſerve thee, my daughter!—Always keep this in thy mind, that although religion itſelf conſiſteth not in word, thought, or deeds alone, yet prayer is the effect of them all; and being the moſt immediate intercourſe with God, is therefore the higheſt act of religion. Conſider it as ſuch, and thou wilt be the more induced to perform this duty in a proper manner.

M. What are the cuſtoms of the world, in regard to the difference of public and private prayer?

Obligations to private prayer, and its advantages.

T. The cuſtom of the world is to follow *example* rather than *precept* or *inſtruction*; though it would be much ſafer, in moſt caſes, to follow inſtruction. In ſome inſtances we muſt conſider both, and let our light ſhine before men. Thoſe

Thoſe who go to church merely from cuſtom and decency, have ſeldom much inclination for devotion, public or private; yet the ſame authority which requires one, requires the other alſo.

M. You have often mentioned to me *family prayer:* how does this ſtand at preſent?

The advantage of family prayer.

T. The good cuſtom of family prayer ſeems to have been long out of faſhion: We act as if we expected miracles to be wrought in our hearts: We do not conſider that bad cuſtoms are the bane, and good ones the guides of virtue, and the trueſt friends to noble and worthy actions. Family prayer is a kind of mutual ſecurity to every one in a family, that they ſhall pray at certain times, whether it be once or twice in a day. Where ſuch prayer is properly repeated by the perſon who officiates, it will rouze the powers of the mind, and conquer that coldneſs and unwillingneſs which is ſo apt to ſeize the heart in this inſtance.

M. But if family prayer is ſo much out of faſhion, I fear that ſervants receive but little benefit from their maſter or miſtreſs in this particular.

T. Indeed I apprehend there is too much reaſon for thy fears. Maſters have the proper authority over us as ſervants, and expect from us ſtrict juſtice and fidelity; but if they do not ſhew an example of piety, and are inattentive to this duty of worſhiping God, under their own roof, what ſolid ſecurity can they expect to find in our virtue? If the ſervant neglects his duty to his God, there is no tye upon him but the fear of *loſing his place*, or the fear of the *gallows:* and the firſt he gets the better of by contriving how to deceive his maſter. The fact is, that too many ſervants have but little ſenſe of moral or religious obligations; and if they are not taught by their parents, nor their maſters, where are they to learn it? Women are juſtly called the *devout ſex:* they are moſt diſtinguiſhed for *piety*, as well as for the duties of domeſtic life; yet from a delicacy, which I cannot account for, ſome ladies think themſelves abſolved from all demands relating to *family* prayer, becauſe they are *not* married, and ſome becauſe they *are*.

M. Is there any thing in the New Teſtament which makes a diſtinction in this particular?

T. None,

T. None, that I know of; except that ſome paſſages ſuppoſe ſingle perſons moſt at liberty to promote the exerciſe of ſuch religious duties; as thoſe who are married are obliged to obey their huſbands. But women have generally influence enough, in theſe caſes, to do whatever is right; and if they would heartily purſue it, I ſhould not deſpair of ſeeing this excellent cuſtom re-eſtabliſhed amongſt us.

M. Was family prayer ever the general cuſtom of our forefathers?

T. I believe it was; but about an hundred and thirty years ago, many of them became hypocritical and fanatical, and made a vaunt of piety. This rendered them ridiculous and contemptible, even to each other. Since that time, *family prayer* has been much neglected; the number of families which now obſerve the cuſtom, being very ſmall, compared to thoſe who never think of it as a duty.

M. Does not the neglect of this cuſtom affect the nation itſelf?

T. Without doubt; for the nation is but a number of families; and when theſe are prudent, ſober, and faithful worſhippers of God, then we have good reaſon to hope for *private happineſs* and *national bleſſings*. At preſent we ſeem to be much off the hinges in this reſpect, and to have much to fear from our *irreligion*. As to hypocriſy, it is out of the queſtion; for ſo far from being aſhamed of being wicked, many glory in their ſhame.

The advantage of praying ſlowly.

M. Since I may loſe the benefit of *family prayer*, tell me, my dear Father, how I may make my own *private* prayers moſt *beneficial* to me

T. I reckon it one of the greateſt advantages to utter words *ſlowly* and *ſolemnly*, as the only way to weigh their *ſenſe* and *meaning*, without which, prayers are a lifeleſs form. Thou wilt find no comfort or advantage, unleſs thy mind is clearly fixed on this holy buſineſs. Thy attention muſt be kept awake, that thou mayſt neither *tire* nor *wander* in thought: Theſe infirmities are much alike, and human nature is much addicted to them. Be watchful, therefore, over thy thoughts, and careful to accommodate the length of thy prayers to the ſtrength of thy mind. On the other hand,

do

do not deceive thyſelf; and under a fond notion of an unavoidable defect in thy ſelf, become habitually negligent. Our hearts are more treacherous than we are apt to imagine. We know that a multitude of words will not avail; but if thou art indolent, cold, and unwilling to pray, thou mayſt think a few words are too many. In ſuch circumſtances thou canſt not be ſaid to offer up thy heart to God, be thy words ever ſo few.

M. I underſtand you clearly, that few words, with attention, may be acceptable; and many without it, fall by the way. But I have ſometimes heard people complain, as if they had not *time* to ſay their prayers.

Excuſe for want of time for prayer.

T. Yes: there are ſome ſuch unreaſonable creatures, who fooliſhly contrive to impoſe on themſelves; or wickedly attempt to deceive others. My maſter once told me, that it is a proverb among the *Hollanders*, who are a buſy nation, that "no one ever loſes any time by ſaying his prayers, or is the poorer for giving alms." The firſt part is very obvious; and the laſt may be eaſily reconciled, where prudence is exerciſed.—There are people, perhaps, who have really cheated themſelves into the belief, that they have no time to pray. But can the moſt indigent child of labor, with any ſhew of reaſon, *pretend want of time to pray to him, who gives life and time*, for the very purpoſe of worſhiping him? Is not this an affront to the Majeſty of Heaven? *Reſt* is *commanded* to be given to our *beaſt*, and ſhall *man* complain that his labor for bread is ſo great, that it allows not time for him to aſk for that *bread* of his *Father*, the Lord, the giver, and preſerver of life?

M. This pretence is ſhameful indeed! But if I ſhould be occaſionally interrupted or prevented from *kneeling?*

T. Why then pray *ſitting*, *walking*, or *ſtanding*. This thou mayſt do in ſecret, and to thyſelf, though thou wert ſurrounded by millions; but at all times, when thou prayeſt, collect thy thoughts, that thy heart may keep pace with thy tongue. This is as eſſential a duty as it is to pray at all; and for the ſame reaſon, *ſhort* prayers, as I have ſaid, are preferable to long ones.

M. What ſhould I do, if at any time, through hurry or

for

forgetfulneſs, I ſhould neglect my prayers, and afterwards recollect?

Recollection of omiſſion in prayer.

T. Thou wilt hardly ever forget them, when thou haſt acquired a habit of praying morning and night. Thou ſhouldſt endevor to be as active in religious duties, as in any other: but the lazineſs which occaſionally invades a great part of mankind, may happen ſometimes to keep thee ſo long in thy bed, as to create hurry and diſſipation of thought, when thou riſeſt, by a ſudden call to thy duty; and thou mayſt be obliged to haſten to thy domeſtic offices, without having offered up thy morning devotion to the Almighty. When this is the caſe, as ſoon as thou recollecteſt (and conſcience will remind thee of the neglect) repair the fault *immediately*, in the beſt manner thou canſt.

M. Is there not more awe and reverence in praying on our knees, after we are riſen, than in bed?

T. I think there is. Prayers in bed are called *ejaculations* (a), as when we are juſt falling into the arms of *ſleep*, which is the image of *death*, or riſing again, as it were from the grave, when we awake. But as we may pray in *thought*, nay even in *words*, without acquainting the world what we are about, if after recollecting thy omiſſion thou ſtill declineſt to do thy duty, thy fault will be aggravated, and the reproaches of thy ſelf-accuſing heart will be doubled. Many, ſuffer buſineſs, or ſome trifling amuſement, to poſſeſs their minds in preference to the God who made them. And if no diſtinguiſhed misfortune happens to thee on the day thou forgetteſt thy prayers, thou wilt be the more ſubject to the ſame omiſſion on the next, and accumulate thy guilt and the *ſin* to be repented of. Nothing is more true in general, than that the *omiſſion of good, is the commiſſion of evil*; and in this inſtance it is remarkably obvious.

M. I flatter myſelf that I ſhall never be guilty of this crime; the very thought of it ſtrikes me with great terror.

T. I am glad it does: Be ſure then of thy *morning prayer*, even though thou ſhouldſt ſay it before thou riſeſt from thy bed; but riſe always time enough, to prevent any interruption. Habit will ſoon render it familiar, and thou wilt receive

(a) See Prayer-Book.

receive ſome part of thy reward in the benefits of *early riſing*, which I need not tell *thee*, who art accuſtomed to riſe with the ſun.

M. As to my *evening prayer*, there is not the ſame reaſon for apprehenſion of negligence.

T. No: but ſtill an equal care is neceſſary to preſerve the regular order of thy life in prayer; and therefore fail not of thy *evening prayer*, as thou wouldſt not fail of thy *bodily* reſt, which is ſo neceſſary to the continuance of thy being.

Danger of neglecting prayer.

M. What a deplorable condition are thoſe in who neglect this duty, and live all their days as *without God.*

T. True; but thoſe who do not *pray* to him, cannot be ſaid to live *with him.* How grievouſly painful it is to the human heart, not rendered callous by a habit of wickedneſs, to think of being afloat in a wide ſea, without *proviſion*, *compaſs*, or *ballaſt*; toſſed by tremendous billows, and driven by tempeſtuous winds; expecting to ſink in the profound abyſs, or be daſhed againſt rocks, or periſh with hunger! Yet this is really and truly *their caſe* who know not *how*, or in what manner, their *ſouls* can be ſaved, having no rational principle of hope. This ſurely is *their ſituation* who live *without God*, by neglecting prayer; and they will ſenſibly feel it ſo, when it is too late.

M. This, alas! is terrible to think of.

Poverty no proof of piety.

T. Comfort thy ſoul, and hope it may never be thy caſe: But imagine not, that becauſe thou art *poor*, thou haſt a better title to the *reality*, or the *reputation* of being more pious than the RICH. This is ſo far from being true, that many of the indigent part of mankind are too profligate, ignorant, or idle, to pray at all. Some, I fear, pray only at church; and others, who pray in private, think it ſufficient if they pray only at night, when, perhaps, they are drowſy and lifeleſs, and very ill qualified to addreſs the Supreme Being. Let it be our part to rectify ſuch evils as well as we are able, and leave the reſt to heaven.

SUNDAY.

CONVERSATION III.

T. WHAT is the matter, my dear girl? Thou appeareſt full of thought: Have all things gone well with thee to-day?

M. I am glad my looks are not deceitful. I am thoughtful, but not ſorrowful. Indeed, my dear Father, your diſcourſe has made ſuch an impreſſion on my mind, that I believe it will live in my memory as long as it ſhall pleaſe heaven to give me breath; and that it will be a means of ſecuring my happineſs, when that breath ſhall be taken from me.

Uſefulneſs of the ſabbath.

T. I rejoice to hear thee talk ſo much like a Chriſtian. This day has been devoted to the public worſhip of God—Haſt thou felt any particular ſatisfaction and pleaſure?

M. Believe me, I am not inſenſible of the pleaſure of *praying*, and hearing God's word; and I find that thinking of it, as a pleaſure, helps to make it ſo. The advice you gave me hath alſo ſtrengthened my attention, and it ſhall be my conſtant endevor to bring away ſomething worth remembering, be it ever ſo little, whenever I go to church.

T. This is the way to anſwer the end of going thither. If thou canſt make ever ſo ſmall a part of the diſcourſe thine own, by the help of thy memory and underſtanding, a conſtant weekly attendance will ſoon ſtore thy mind with ſacred knowledge, and make thee wiſe in the great buſineſs of *everlaſting happineſs*. Every child may remember the *text*; but if thou art attentive to the diſcourſe, thou will bring away ſomething more, which, by ſerious reflection, thou mayſt engraft on thine own ſtock, that it may grow up with thee, and bear the richeſt fruit. The more the memory is exerciſed, the more capable it becomes of retaining impreſſions, eſpecially where the heart is intereſted. Many and great are the advantages to be drawn from the *ſabbath-day*. If it were

ſhot for the frequent return of it, where ſhould the villagers meet to entertain each other with converſation? And how would good neighbourhood and friendly ſociety be maintained amongſt us?

M. True, my Father: or when ſhould we have an opportunity of appearing in our beſt attire, and make ſome figure in each others eye?

T. But there is ſomething of greater conſequence. We muſt conſider it as the means of refreſhing our minds with ſentiments of religion; and chearing us, amidſt all our toils and labors, with hopes of *happineſs after death.* Were the ſabbath not *commanded* to be kept holy, yet would it be highly neceſſary to our well-being to make this diſtinction, and indeed without it, what would become of *religion?*

M. But God hath expreſsly commanded the ſabbath-day to be kept holy:

T. Moſt certainly: thou remembereſt the *fourth commandment*, in which thou art inſtructed with regard to what thou *art*, and what thou *art not* to do on this day, and a reaſon is graciouſly aſſigned by the Almighty for the particular appointment.

M. Is not the duty of attending divine worſhip required of all *chriſtians*, without diſtinction of perſons?

Dangerous example of neglecting and abuſing the ſabbath.

T. Yes: thoſe who are regardleſs of the ſabbath, and ſeldom appear at church, are either ignorant and abandoned wretches, who loiter about, ſeeking a miſerable amuſement, having ſcarce ever thought on the being of a God; or ſuch as are become preſumptuous from their ſuperior condition, and think they may do as they pleaſe, and make a religion of their own contrivance: but whatever they imagine, they cannot alter the laws of God, nor reverſe his commandments to *keep holy the ſabbath day.*——God has made a ſeparation of this day to *himſelf*, and directed us to diſtinguiſh it by peculiar acts of devotion and religion; and this being ſo ſtrong a fence againſt impiety, it is amazing that it ſhould ever enter into the heart of man to imagine, that he will diſpenſe with the breach of a law, which he has written in ſuch ſtrong characters on our minds. God is jealous of his honor, and if we decline the public worſhip,

and as it were refuſe to pay that homage which is ſo infinitely due to the ſupreme Lord and Proprietor of all, and which he ſo expreſsly requires from us, how can we eſcape puniſhment?

M. What have you generally obſerved to be the effect of neglecting the ſabbath?

T. According to the beſt of my obſervation, in ſeveral inſtances, this has been attended with very ſad effects: it hath either troubled and diſordered the mind, and made the thought of death dreadful, or rendered the heart hard and inſenſible to religious impreſſions, and at length left it abandoned to its own bad inclinations. He that forſakes the ſabbath, forſakes his Maker; and, as it were, puts himſelf out of his protection; and he that ceaſes to reſt his hope on his obedience to his God, muſt be wretched. If we conſider the breath we draw, at the will of the Almighty, can we forbear crying out with the Pſalmiſt, "*Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diſeaſes: who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindneſs and tender mercies: who feedeth thy mouth with good things, ſo that thy youth is renewed as the eagle.*

M. I think, indeed, our *devotion* ſhould fly on the wings of love to the God that made us.

T. Thou knoweſt, my daughter, that the Jews of old time, long before our Saviour came into the world, were the *choſen people of God*, and that their wiſe king Solomon built a church or temple, which was the glory of the whole earth; nothing like it was ever known before or ſince *(a)*: nor do we know that the Almighty ever ſhewed ſo many and great wonders, or appeared in ſo miraculous a manner, except in that wonder in which we are moſt intereſted, namely, *the coming of our Saviour!* The deſign of this temple was, for the people to *worſhip God in public*, well knowing that the Almighty expected this of them.

M. I remember Solomon made a very beautiful prayer at the dedication of this temple: do you recollect it?

T. The

(a) It is ſaid to have coſt 800 millions; near as much as our country is computed to be worth.

Solomon's prayer on the dedication of the temple.

T. The prayer recorded in the Old Teſtament is in theſe words: "When thy people Iſrael ſhall be *ſmitten* down before the enemy, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee, and ſhall turn again to thee, and confeſs thy name, and pray, and make ſupplication unto thee *in this houſe*, then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the ſin of thy people Iſrael, and bring them again unto the land which thou gaveſt unto their fathers!—When the *heavens are ſhut up*, and there is no rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee, if they pray *towards this place*, and confeſs thy name, and turn from their ſins when thou afflicteſt them, then *hear thou in heaven*, and forgive the ſin of thy ſervants!—If thy people *go out to battle* againſt their enemy, whitherſoever thou ſhalt ſend them, and ſhall pray unto the Lord toward the *city* which thou haſt choſen, and toward the *houſe (a)* that I have built for thy name, then *hear* thou in heaven their *prayer* and their *ſupplication*, and maintain their *cauſe!*—If they *ſin* againſt thee (for there is no man that ſinneth not) and thou be *angry* with them, and deliver them to the enemy; yet if they ſhall *bethink* themſelves and *repent*, and ſo *return* to thee with all their *heart*, and with all their *ſoul*, then hear thou their prayer, and maintain their cauſe, and forgive thy people their tranſgreſſion, and hearken unto them in all that they call unto thee for." Thus thou ſeeſt what favor Solomon hoped to bring down on his people by means of this temple, and the incenſe of prayer offered up in it, for the removal of their calamities, and the advancement of their happineſs. And accordingly we find that the Jews were protected or afflicted, as they behaved well or ill; were happy or miſerable, as they called upon God, or *neglected* him. Now, *Mary*, I would aſk, where ſhall *we meet* as a people, to ſend up *our* prayers to God, to avert the evils we labor under, or to ſend down his bleſſings, if we never go to *church?*

M. Is it not the cuſtom of our country, and of all other nations, upon every great event, to offer up prayers to God in public?

T. We conſtantly find, that in great *ſickneſſes*, *war*, or *famine*, *heavy unſeaſonable rains*, or *droughts*; in all public diſtreſſes

(a) Temple.

treſſes, or for public thankſgivings, we *fly to the temples of God*, there to pour out our ſouls before him. The ſenſe of God and his providence, by any extraordinary interpoſition, fills our churches, they are crowded with worſhippers. But, alas! the impreſſion ſoon dies away, and men fall again into that *forgetfulneſs* of God, and that courſe of wickedneſs, which were the firſt cauſe of their calamity: Is not then public worſhip an object of public concern?

M. Are there no laws for the puniſhment of thoſe who break the ſabbath?

Sabbath-breakers puniſhable.

T. Yes, in ſome few caſes; but they hardly ever extend beyond vagabonds, or the poor. But what are the laws of men to ſuch people as do not regard the laws of God! If they will not obey the fourth commandment, I am afraid they will not be very ſincere in obeying of any other. The duty of keeping holy the ſabbath-day is one of the chief obligations both of *Jew* and *Chriſtian*. In all civilized countries, the neglect of it hath generally proved the great inlet to all manner of wickedneſs. Wherever the ſabbath has been *broken*, a whole tide of wickedneſs has flowed in at the breach. God hath *bleſſed this day and hallowed it*, and they *unbleſs* themſelves who *profane* it.—O my daughter, as thou valueſt thy ſoul, rejoice in the *ſabbath-day*, and attend divine ſervice with *conſtancy* and *pleaſure*. If thou neglecteſt thy duty on *this day*, thou neglecteſt thy *religion*; and thou canſt not expect any bleſſing on any *other day*.

M. I ſhall not forget your affectionate and earneſt charge: I am ſenſible of the importance of it; and always ſorry when I ſee others behaving careleſsly at church.

T. Nothing is ſo childiſh as to be careleſs in church. People who have not ſenſe enough to know the end and deſign of coming thither, ſhould not be permitted to put their feet in it.

M. Surely this muſt be very plain to thoſe who conſider churches as ſeparated and dedicated to the worſhip of the great Lord of heaven and earth: nothing contrary to the holineſs of the place, ought, upon any account, to be permitted.

Pleaſure of going to church.

T. True, my daughter. Do thou then rejoice at the re-

turn

turn of the ſabbath; not ſo much becauſe thou reſteſt from labor, as becauſe thou haſt ſo fair an opportunity of offering thy heart to thy Maker. The Almighty has declared, that he is pleaſed with the incenſe offered by numbers of his rational creatures aſſembled together. Go with *gladneſs* to the houſe of God, not only to *worſhip* him, but to *hear* his word from the mouth of his miniſters. Thoſe who are induſtrious in what they undertake of worldly concerns, ſhould never be lazy in religious duties: and thoſe who have pleaſure in praying to God, will put their truſt in him when they pray; and inſtead of flying *from* church, as *from a houſe of correction*, will fly *to* it as the *place of their higheſt comfort*. Praiſe and thankſgiving will be their entertainment, and they will pour out their hearts in humble acknowledgment of their ſins, and renew their reſolutions of amendment of life. In a word, if people preſerve in their minds the reverence due to the *ſabbath*, every thing good may be expected from them; but nothing truly worthy of praiſe can be hoped for, from thoſe who with-hold their homage from God *on that day*.

Induſtry and piety often go together.

M. I am ſenſible, that the ſame induſtrious diſpoſition which inclines us to do our duty in laboring with our hands, ſhould in all reaſon lead us to do our duty to God, from whom we receive health and ſtrength to purſue the buſineſs of the world. I hope my miſtreſs, being ſo good a lady, will think it a part of *her* duty, to give me leave to diſcharge *mine*; and not reſtrain me from going to church *once*, if not *twice* on the ſabbath-day.

T. There are ſome maſters and miſtreſſes, *Mary*, who think but little about their own ſouls; and therefore are not apt to have much concern for thoſe of their *ſervants:* I hope thou wilt be taken proper care of: do always the *beſt* thou canſt, nobody can do more; and remember, that however faulty many of our ſuperiors may be in *their* ſtations, and no one is without faults, the greater part of *us* are generally worſe in *ours*, and therefore we ſhould rather mend our own manners than complain. There are many who *know* their duty, yet do not *practice* it: if our *betters* do not

ſhew

ſhew us an *example*, it is in *our* power to put them to the bluſh.

Danger of careleſſneſs at church.

M. It is very obvious, that a careleſs behaviour at church is very blameable, and even ſinful; and I have always conſidered ſtaring about in any part of the ſervice as a great fault.

T. This is too often the caſe; but do thou judge with candor, and mind thy own duty, that thou mayſt not appear in the ſame light to them, as they do to thee. It is our duty to adore our Maker in our thoughts and words; *by* our bodies, and *in* our ſouls: the order of our church requires *kneeling* when we pray: it is the *humbleſt* poſture; and helps us to think of our dependency on the God before whom we kneel; but we are governed more by faſhion than by reaſon, and people think they may do as they pleaſe, becauſe there is no puniſhment for this kind of offence.

M. If worſhip requires *words* as well as thoughts, how comes it that many do not make the reſponces; is not this a great offence?

T. Offence! aye ſurely: whoſe praiſes, *Mary*, ſhould we utter, if not his who gave us voice? So long as thou haſt the power of ſpeech, ſound forth the praiſes of the Almighty.

M. How can people be ſo careleſs!

T. Alas! they do not reflect that "all the works of men are as the ſun before God, and his eyes continually upon their ways." Some come to his houſe with their thoughts full of buſineſs or pleaſure, or ſo overwhelmed with intemperance, that they are fit only for ſleep. It is the crime and misfortune of many, in all conditions, that when they meet to worſhip God, they do not addreſs him with ſuch awe and homage, as becomes *rational* creatures, and as we juſtly ſtile ourſelves, *miſerable ſinners*. There is too much reaſon to believe, that neither our underſtandings nor affections are, in general, engaged in the manner they ought to be. I do not mean to undervalue any honeſt endevor, becauſe it doth not blaze forth as a flame. I know there are ſome who run mad, by what they call *religion:* but I ſpeak of thoſe who

ſeem

ſeem to be mad for want of religion. As to careleſſineſs and inattention in devotion, this prevails too much in the higheſt ſeats of learning, as well as at the *old woman*'s ſchool, at which thou waſt taught to read and pray.

Innocent amuſement on the ſabbath.

M. Does the precept of keeping holy the ſabbath-day, abſolutely prohibit all innocent amuſements?

T. We have already talked of innocent converſation, and it cannot be ſuppoſed that we ſhould be ſo employed as to give our minds no reſt or relaxation. The Jews, in our Saviour's time, pretended to be much ſcandalized, even at his doing works of mercy on the ſabbath-day; but he reproved them with ſeverity, leaving us a ſilent leſſon, that ſuch employment ſhould be our delight. Works of neceſſity are warrantable, ſuch as pulling the ox out of the pit: but we are not to follow our worldly buſineſs on this day. As to amuſement, the ſabbath is a day of *rejoicing*; but the proper ſubject of the joy, is the wonderful works of God in the creation of the world, and his goodneſs and mercy in the redemption of mankind by Jeſus Chriſt *(a)*. And if after we have worſhipped God in public, and paſſed this day religiouſly, we indulge ourſelves with any relaxation or amuſement, it muſt be ſuch as is ſober and pious, not in the leaſt tending to *madneſs* or intemperance of mirth, and much leſs of exceſs or debauchery; therefore take care to avoid ſuch company as abuſe the ſabbath-day. People muſt make uſe of their *reaſon*, and conſult their own hearts, with regard to what is lawful and fit: They may be ſure, that the greateſt pleaſure ſhould be in going to church, twice in the day, if there is no lawful hindrance. And foraſmuch as we reſt from our labor, and have time to read the ſcriptures, and other good books, for which, perhaps, we may not have opportunity on other days, not to allot one poor hour or two, to *reading*, or *hearing others read*, argues great childiſhneſs, to ſay no worſe. Remember, my dear *Mary*, that the hour will come, when we ſhall be *all ſpirit*; let us not then be *all body*, in theſe days of trial, but ſtrive to ſpiritualize our affections,

(a) See Prayer in Prayer-Book, at the end, for Sunday.

fections, and ſet them on things above, which endure for ever; not on things on the earth, of which not one day's tenure can be ſecured to us, by all the arts and inventions, all the ſtrength and power of man.

MONDAY.

MONDAY.

CONVERSATION IV.

T. MY dear *Mary*, I am quite fatigued!——I have labored the more to-day, having found additional ſtrength from yeſterday's reſt. My maſter uſed to ſay, that the *pleaſures* of the huſbandman were next to the pleaſures of the philoſopher, and ſo may his *pains* be alſo, for ought I know: but there's one advantage a huſbandman enjoys, whether he be a philoſopher or not, that he is ſure his labors are uſeful to mankind.

M. But you go contrary to the common rule, my Father. Many weary themſelves moſt on Sundays, and are fit for ſo much the leſs labor on the day following; and ſome, I believe, are not fit for any work at all.

T. Our *pleaſures* ſhould always be ſuch, as may enable us to bear labor.

The duty of remembering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

M. I hope you are not ſo tired, but you can talk as freely as you did laſt night; and I am anxious to know your thoughts on a ſerious ſubject: I mean the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which I conſider as a part of the devotion of a chriſtian.

T. O *Mary*, I feel the very mention of this ſubject revives my drooping ſpirits; and I hope I ſhall never fail, while my ſpeech remains, to talk of my *remembrance* of the great Saviour and Redeemer of the world!

M. Do you conſider the celebration of the Lord's Supper as a part of the devotion of a chriſtian?

T. There can be no doubt of it: and it is indeed a more immediate and particular application to God, through the merits and mediation of Chriſt, than any other part of devotion. This is "an outward and viſible ſign of an in-

ward and ſpiritual grace." In prayer there is no *viſible* ſign of grace; and it may be obſerved, that men have always prayed; but the commemoration of the death of Chriſt could be only ſince he came into the world and died. The *mockery* is very obvious, when men talk of the religion of Chriſt, and call themſelves his followers, and yet will not *remember* him in the manner he hath *commanded*. The moſt reverend Archbiſhop SYNGE hath left us, among many others, two little tracts *(a)* of great value. This excellent prelate ſeems to have had a very exact knowledge of the human heart, and a clear diſcernment of the various fallacies of it, in reſpect to the *fooliſh excuſes* uſually made, for not attending this holy ordinance. The advice he gives is ſo judicious, and at the ſame time ſo recommendatory of true piety; ſo comfortable, and yet ſo guarded againſt all encouragement to *preſumption*, that according to what my good maſter ſaid when he put it into my hands, it is worthy the peruſal of the greateſt divine or philoſopher; and the meaneſt of mankind with common ſenſe, or common candor, cannot read it without being convinced of the importance of this duty.

M. What does the archbiſhop ſay of it?

T. His book which I recommend to thee *(b)* will beſt inform thee: but I remember ſo much, that he who reads it muſt ſee the *dying commands* of his crucified Lord in ſuch a light, as to oblige him either to yield to the force of them, or give up all pretenſions to piety. That which before might have created a myſterious awe, and prevented him from thus commemorating the death of his Saviour, will, upon a candid peruſal of this book, appear as a tender, kind, and gracious invitation to the ſupper of his Lord, his Maſter, and his Friend.

M. Do you conſider this ſacrament only as *a remembrance* of Chriſt?

T. The

(a) An *Eſſay* towards making a knowledge of religion eaſy; and likewiſe another tract, *Excuſes* for not receiving the ſacrament anſwered.

(b) Archbiſhop Synge's Excuſes for not receiving the Sacrament. See part of this tract at the end of this day's converſation.

T. The remembrance of him is the *first* consideration.

The ingratitude of neglecting to receive.

M. Young as I am, I have often wondered to see how negligent and careleſs people in general are, in reſpect to this remembrance.

T. It is becauſe they are become ſo ſtrangely *fooliſh* and *wicked*, and totally indifferent to all religion, that they are ſo negligent and ungrateful to their benefactor. Ingratitude has been always conſidered as ſo ſhameful a crime, that no man would ever acknowledge himſelf guilty of it, except by accident or ſurprize. It deſtroys ſociety, by rendering it dangerous to be charitable: he that is ungrateful, betrays the cauſe both of God and man. I have heard my maſter talk of a certain ſoldier, belonging to an ancient hero *(a)*, who having been preſerved by a villager, and hoſpitably entertained by him for a conſiderable time; was yet ſo abandoned as to miſrepreſent him to his prince, and obtain for himſelf the gift of his benefactor's houſe and land; but the king being ſoon informed of the truth, cauſed the ſoldier to be ſeized, and theſe words branded on his forehead, *The ungrateful gueſt.* Thoſe who are negligent of their duty to their beſt friend, with regard to the ſacrament, if they do not carry *ingratitude* ſtampt on their *forehead*, they will find it, upon looking inwardly, to be deeply rooted in their *hearts*. I intend to tell thee more of my thoughts on *ingratitude*, hereafter: but in the mean time, let thy heart mourn, my dear *Mary*, at what I am going to ſay!—I have much reaſon to fear, there are many who *live* and *die* without *ever* receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Some begin very late in life to receive it, and others leave it off very early. This negligence, I ſay, ariſes from very wicked, or very fooliſh reaſons, or *no reaſons* at all. People ſtand in awe of this ſolemnity, as of a very *good thing*; they do not partake of it, becauſe they think themſelves not good enough; and they act as if they were *determined to be no better*, or as if they thought this holy ordinance could not be any means of making them better.

M. Can they really think they ſhould not be the better for it?

T. Upo-

(a) Philip King of Macedon.

T. Upon my word, I believe they do not think about it: but this I know, that if I were to invite my neighbor to ſup with me, and he *excuſed himſelf* becauſe he was not in a cleanly condition, I ſhould be aſtoniſhed that he did not ſet about to *waſh himſelf*. But ſuppoſing that I were to offer to furniſh him with the requiſites for making himſelf clean, and he ſhould ſtill inſiſt that he could not come; I ſhould conclude that he was not inclined to my friendſhip, but ſought for a reaſon to excuſe himſelf.

M. You could not ſuppoſe any thing elſe.

T. Is it not then a melancholy conſideration, *Mary*, that *we* pretending to be ſo *wiſe* a people, ſhould be ſo *fooliſh*? There is no *miracle* in the effects of this celebration: it neither *ſaves* nor *deſtroys*, but as it operates on the hearts, the lives, and manners of men, like other religious duties.

M. What can be the reaſon of the ſtrange conduct of people in this inſtance?

T. Strange indeed! The reaſon, as I obſerved before, is, that they are *lazy* and *careleſs*, and chuſe to be ſo, though at the hazard of everlaſting puniſhment. They labor for the bread they eat, but fly from this heavenly nouriſhment. They poiſon themſelves with the ſin of thoughtleſſneſs and negligence, inſtead of taking the medicine which is recommended by Chriſt, the great phyſician of ſouls, as a cure for the diſeaſes of their minds. Our Lord and Maſter, the great Redeemer, in whom they profeſs to truſt, invites them to his ſupper, as upon another occaſion he ſays, "Come unto me, *all* ye who travel and are heavy laden, and *I* will refreſh you." And can they think then, if they do go to him, in true ſincerity of heart, they ſhall not be relieved? He directs us, on this occaſion, the moſt ſolemn the world ever knew, to come to him in this ſacrament. *He*, the Son of God, and Lord of Life, the Judge and the Redeemer of the World, was going *to die for us*; and as our *friend*, who beſt knew our intereſt, he commanded us to *do this in remembrance* of him.

M. Surely, whilſt I retain any memory, or preſerve any good in my thoughts, *I ſhall never forget him.*

T. My dear daughter, I hope thou wilt not. Conſider that he tells us *why* we ſhould perform this duty, and *how* it is to be done. He bids us receive the bread and wine in *remembrance* of his body pierced, and blood ſpilt, as a token of his wonderful love towards us; and requires this *memorial* to be continued through every generation, until his coming again in glory, to judge both the *living* and the *dead*.—Can any thing be plainer than this? Can any thing appear more reaſonable in itſelf, or more eaſy to be underſtood?

M. Indeed, my Father, I think that thoſe who *do not underſtand this*, are very weak and fooliſh: and thoſe who *will not* attend to it, are very wicked.

T. Do not pronounce ſentence too haſtily: I grant one would not think it poſſible that people could be ſo fooliſh as not to ſee the *force and obligation of this command*; nor do I conceive how any perſon, in his right mind, can refuſe ſuch an invitation from the greateſt and beſt friend in the world, upon ſo vaſt and important an occaſion: yet certain it is, that many decline this heavenly entertainment, though the neglect muſt be highly affronting to the great Maſter of the feaſt.—If we conſider the *command*, as from the mighty *leader*, the *captain of our ſalvation*, our refuſal to obey it, ſeems to be of the ſame nature as a ſoldier's offence, when he diſobeys his commander: And what is the puniſhment of this, but death?—I *conſider* that Chriſt is alſo our *ſovereign prince* and *lawgiver*; and who among the ſons of men will ſay, *I will not obey him?* Would not this be *rebellion?* Would it not be revolting againſt the loyalty we owe to him, and a ſignal of defiance?

Nature of the ſeveral motives to receive.

M. Pray tell me, my Father, is there any difference with reſpect to our obedience, between a law which commands a thing *to be* done, and the ſame authority which orders a thing *not* to be done?

T. Difference! Upon my word I ſee no difference: our Saviour ſays, *Do this in remembrance of me*, which I think is as abſolute a command, as any one of the *ten* commandments. *Thou ſhall not ſteal*, is a commandment: If thou *doſt* ſteal, thou knoweſt it is a breach of this commandment; and if thou

thou *doſt not* receive the ſacrament, and in this act *remember Chriſt*, is it not likewiſe a breach of one of the laws and commands of *Chriſt?*—It is refuſing to do what He requires to be done. Can any argument for doing this be more powerful than *his* command? Can any precept be more reaſonable in itſelf, if compared to the common affairs of men; and does it not carry with it, in every reſpect, the ſame authority as any other precept which he delivered, or any other part of the ſcriptures?

M. What do you apprehend was the intention of our Saviour in giving this command, or inſtituting this memorial?

T. It is obvious to every one, who is of years to underſtand their religion, what he deſigned, not for his immediate followers only, but for all generations, to the end of the world.

Nature of the Sacrament.

1. It is a means to *fix* and *imprint* on our minds, in a manner the moſt affecting, and moſt *laſting*, the remembrance of his death and paſſion, as the *ſtrongeſt motive to obedience.*

2. It is a commemoration of the merits and *death* of Chriſt, by an humble acknowledgment of its being the *only ground of our hope of pardon.*

3. It is a *public declaration* to the world of our *faith* in him, and that we, on our part, will endevor to continue down the *memorial of his love to all generations.*

4. It is the higheſt expreſſion of our *thanks* and *gratitude* to God, for his unſpeakable mercy, in ſending his ſon into the world, for the redemption of mankind.

5. It is a *confirmation*, on our part, of the covenant which God hath made with us, and a thankful acceptance of thoſe *conditions of pardon* which he has offered, and whereby we *acknowledge* and *renew* our *obligations* to obey him.

Is not this plain *common ſenſe?* Can there be any thing in it which ſhould make us run into a *certain neglect of him*, to avoid a *poſſible diſreſpect to him?* Of all commands, it is natural to lay the greateſt ſtreſs upon thoſe which are given us by *our friends*, *a little before their death*, eſpecially if we really *love* them, and *they* particularly deſire any thing to be done in *remembrance* of them. Suppoſe that the lady whom

Regard to the words of a dying friend.

thou

thou art going to ſerve, by an aſtoniſhing mark of her love and compaſſion for thee, ſhould preſerve thy life; but in ſnatching thee from the grave, die herſelf: Suppoſe ſhe were to leave thee a creditable maintenance, upon the condition of thy doing ſome particular act very eaſily performed; wouldſt thou not do it?

M. If I did not, my *folly* would be the deriſion of children, and my ingratitude as black as hell: I ſhould loſe my ſupport by a negligence which would plunge me into poverty, and give me the character of a mad-woman or an idiot. And yet, alas! what could *ſhe*, or any *mortal* do for *me*, or any *other*? She might ſave my life for a few days or years, and render that life comfortable whilſt it laſted; but here all her kindneſs muſt end.

T. Well haſt thou ſpoken, my dear *Mary*. *Behold the real caſe!* Were we to conſider the dignity and importance of *him who died for us*, even the *Son of God!* that he died becauſe we ſhould otherwiſe have *periſhed*; and that by his death he ſaves us from everlaſting deſtruction; ſhould we not *obey his dying words, and lead a virtuous life?* How could we reſiſt his commands? But he *promiſes* alſo to make us *happy*, far beyond the power of words to deſcribe, even for ever and ever!

M. How in the name of *mercy* can it then be, that people are ſo bewitched with *laxineſs* and *ingratitude?* How can they be ſuch ſtrangers to their own happineſs, and hazard the greateſt miſery!

T. There is but one ſhadow of reaſon for it, and this is the ſame as for all other neglects of duty. They firſt imagine the *happineſs* to be at a great diſtance, and therefore *uncertain*; and the miſery to be ſtill further off, becauſe they do not chuſe to think of being made miſerable. In ſhort, they reaſon like *fools* or *children*.

M. As to the great diſtance: Do they believe they ſhall live a *thouſand* years? Is not death always at their elbow?

T. True, my daughter; but they behold it only in *thought*: they do not conſider that it is not poſſible for them, in their mortal ſtate, to ſee it any other way. They do not reflect that all our *hopes* and *fears*, which conſtitute ſo great a part of our *happineſs* or *miſery* here below, conſiſt in *thought*.

M. They think to a bad purpoſe who do not act agreeably to their conſciouſneſs of *right* and *wrong*. I have heard of people ſo afflicted in thought, as to wiſh to die, in hopes of finding a peaceful grave.

T. There are many ſuch caſes: People ſhould conſider this matter as they do *truth* and *falſehood*, which are not to the hand, the mouth, or belly, as meat and drink, nor as raiment to the body; but that they are equally ſubſtantial to the *ſpirit*; and *we* are, with reſpect to our *ſouls*, *ſpiritual*, *rational* and *accountable* Beings, as much as we are *animals*, with regard to the body. Depend upon what I ſay; their neglect is the effect of abſolute wickedneſs, or groſs careleſſneſs and ignorance.

M. Indeed I think that *nothing* can be ſaid in excuſe of negligence in this inſtance.

Folly of the papiſts in the ſacrament.

T. We muſt ſtill compaſſionate the infirmities of others, and try to bring them over rather by *perſuaſion* than *reproach*. There is a ſtrange kind of fallacy in this matter; the conduct of many proteſtants of the *Church of England*, compared to the *papiſts*, has ſome likeneſs: we commit as great a violence on common ſenſe, as they do. They are ſo groſsly deluded, as to pay divine honors to the bread and wine, as if they were converted into the real body and blood of Chriſt: *Their prieſts* impoſe on them this *monſtrous faith*: and *we* impoſe on ourſelves, by the moſt *monſtrous negligence*.

Falſe terrors in regard to the ſacrament.

M. I have heard many people expreſs themſelves with terror, in relation to *Receiving unworthily!*

T. I have told thee already, that if their fears ariſe from an habitual indulgence in great offences, their condition is *terrible*; but if they intend to *forſake* them, then to *neglect* this means of calling to mind their great Friend and Benefactor, who has declared he will *aſſiſt* them in conquering themſelves, and trampling over the world, is ſuch an *inconſiſtency*, as is ſhocking to common ſenſe.

M. I believe theſe people do not underſtand what St. *Paul* ſays.

T. Alas! *Mary*, they are not *inclined* to underſtand; their *wills* are wrong as well as their *heads*, that do not comprehend. Thou mayſt remember, that this apoſtle reminds us

that

that as we have *houſes to eat and drink in*, we ſhould not come to the houſe of God and to the Lord's Supper, not diſtinguiſhing a ſolemn act of religion from a common meal, which was the crime of the *Corinthians*, who were even intemperate at ſuch meals. Well might he tell *them*, this was eating and drinking their own *condemnation*; which *he interprets* by ſaying, that God would be provoked to inflict ſeveral kinds of judgments upon them, *if they continued to act ſo wicked a part*. But what is this to the purpoſe of thoſe childiſh and fantaſtical fears, which a great part of us entertain in relation to the celebration of this act of *devotion*? Solemn it is, and awful; but when we fall down on our knees before God, or ſend up our hearts to him in prayer, is not this alſo a *ſolemn* and *awful* duty? As well may we ſay, that we will *never pray*, becauſe it requires thought and ſeriouſneſs, as that we will not receive the ſacrament, for fear of offending God. We offend him moſt ſurely by *not receiving*.

M. I apprehend that if we pray in charity with the world, intending to lead a new life, we are, with reſpect to the temper of our minds, in ſuch circumſtances as qualify us to come to the table of the Lord.

T. So I believe indeed, or we are guilty of mockery, for we implore the mercies of heaven (as I have already obſerved) upon the very terms and conditions of *forgiving* others, and promoting the happineſs of our fellow-creatures. And if we mean to *repent*, we mean to *amend*; and what is amendment but leading *a new life*? There muſt be an intention when we pray, of aſking *mercy* upon ſome condition; and this never can be to bargain with the Almighty to indulge ourſelves in any ſin. But it goes farther: let us look into the *Lord's prayer*, and it will ſtare us in the face; we pray that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven, can we then live in direct oppoſition to his will, by neglecting the remembrance of our Lord who taught us ſo to pray?

M. I wiſh, my father, you would talk to *Betty* and *Suſan*, and ſome others of our acquaintance, who are honeſtly enough inclined, if it was not for the *fooliſhneſs* of their prejudices, and their falſe apprehenſions. They ſee no further

than their noſe, and derive a kind of contentment from an opinion, that they avoid giving *great offence* by not receiving the ſacrament; not in the leaſt conſidering how great offence they may give by *not* receiving. But pray tell me, my Father, what is your opinion concerning *frequent* receiving?

T. There is no time exactly pointed out: the doing it *frequently* ſeems to be *implied* by the words of our Saviour, "Do this *as oft* as ye drink it in remembrance of me." Cuſtom and conſideration for the labor of the clergy reſtrain ſome well meaning people in regard to receiving *often*; but for my own part, I ſee not how any chriſtian can decently turn his back on the Lord's table. The method of adminiſtring may be rendered eaſy to the clergy; and there are ſome thouſands of clergymen would be glad of *more work*, in hope of *more pay*: and ſurely the laborer is worthy of his hire, in *ſpiritual*, as well as *temporal* concerns. Thus ſtands this important buſineſs in the chriſtian world; and thou who art turned of *ſeventeen years of age*, being *wiſe* enough to underſtand it, will, I hope, be *good* enough to practice what thou knoweſt. Thou haſt *received* more than once: For heaven's ſake, go on! I know too well, that ſervants are generally extremely neglectful of this duty: If it ſhould be the caſe with thy fellow-ſervants, I charge thee, as thou loveſt the name of *Chriſt*, and hopeſt for mercy through his blood and ſufferings, not to *follow their example*, but ſtrive to induce them to follow thine; and by diſcharging their obligation, promote their own ſafety and happineſs.

M. What ſhall I ſay to them, if they will not?

T. Bid them read the *communion ſervice* with attention, and examine what the thing is before they *condemn it*, or in effect *condemn themſelves*. If they are ſcrupulous, let them alſo read Dr. SYNGE'S *Excuſes for not receiving the Sacrament, anſwered*. And in regard to thyſelf, tell them what *thy Father* ſaid to thee at parting; ſhew them the *little book* which I gave thee, with my laſt moſt urgent and affectionate command, to *periſh* rather than neglect this duty. Remind them of the groſs abſurdity of ſuppoſing themſelves *wiſer* than the *wiſeſt*, or more prudent than the ſobereſt and beſt of mankind: Tell them to conſider the *high imprudence*, the *great folly*, the

groſs

groſs iniquity of their neglect, and the *deſtruction* which waits the deſpiſers of religion. Aſk them if this is better for them than *peace* and *confidence* in the *mercies of God*, and *hope* in *everlaſting joy*. Remind them, that they are as anſwerable to God for their neglect, as *other chriſtians* of the firſt rank and condition. Tell them, that they have actually fewer temptations than people who are *rich*; and though they know leſs, they know ſo much that ignorance cannot be admitted as a plea.

M. If my companions ſhould not be awed by my ſerioufneſs in this matter, but deride me *as a young ſaint!*

T. This will not be a ſufficient reaſon for thee to tell them they are *old ſinners*; but go on unchanged in the way thou art perſuaded is right; and mourn over *their*-fooliſhneſs and obſtinacy, who perhaps would ſhut their eyes, if all the terrors of deſtruction ſtood in array before them, and opened wide their tremendous jaws. Do thy duty, I ſay, and ſtill hope that others will do theirs. Thus thou wilt approve thyſelf worthy, and in good time receive thy reward. What canſt thou do more than expreſs thy ſorrow on this, as on all other occaſions, wherein men tranſgreſs and rebel againſt common ſenſe, as well as the decrees of heaven?—*Do thy part* for thyſelf, and as a friend to human kind. *Uſe thy reaſon*, and then mayſt thou expect that God will give thee his grace and aſſiſtance. He hath given us power; can we imagine, if we do not uſe it, he will give us *more power?*

M. I am ſatisfied, my Father: I am perſuaded that God requires of all of us to exert the *reaſon which he hath given us*, and not to let it ſleep.

T. To put thy truſt in him, is one effort of thy *reaſon*, as well as of thy *faith*; and the *more* thou exerteſt *both*, the more aſſiſtance he will give thee. This is ſo agreeable to the *word of God*, and ſo correſpondent with the *mind of man*, that there cannot be any doubt of it. Where people are ſo weak as to profeſs to leave reaſon out of the queſtion, they may rank with ſheep or oxen. If reaſon is not the meaſure of our conduct, then do we ceaſe to be rational, and there is an end to all human diſcourſe.—If they conſider this as a matter of faith, or the evidence of things not *ſeen*, they may

conclude, that *faith* is not *contrary* to reaſon, though it is *above* reaſon, and ſtands higher in the human mind. Thoſe who hold opinions contrary to *reaſon*, whether they be pious or impious perſons, are ſurely above argument: there is no ſuch thing as talking with them; it is in vain, for thoſe who are qualified for this taſk, to diſpute; but do thou, *Mary*, avoid *argument:* Practiſe what thou thinkeſt right, and leave the event to heaven.—In examining the *archbiſhop's inſtructions*, thou wilt ſee how they correſpond with a virtuous life; and let nothing in them frighten thee, more than thou wouldſt be afraid of *virtue*, inſtead of being afraid of *vice*.—Let us *read them*.

M. With all my heart.

INSTRUCTIONS *given by Archbiſhop* SYNGE, *for the proper* CELEBRATION *of the* LORD'S SUPPER.

I. *General Preparation.*

IF you would maintain and keep yourſelf in a conſtant *general preparation* for the holy communion, ſo as always to be fit, upon the ſhorteſt notice, to partake of it (which every *chriſtian* ought to endevor after) be careful in the obſervation of theſe following rules:

1. Be diligent in your endevors to know and underſtand the ſeveral parts of your duty to *God*, to *men*, and to *yourſelf*; for which end, you muſt be careful to make the beſt uſe you can, of thoſe *means of inſtruction* and knowledge, which God has put into your power; ſuch as *reading the holy ſcriptures*, and other *good books*, or hearing them read; *attending upon the public offices of preaching*, catechizing, and the like *(a)*.

2. You muſt, upon all occaſions, be induſtrious and zealous in avoiding every ſin, and to practice and perform every duty according to your ability and opportunity for the ſame *(b)*.

3. You muſt very often think and meditate upon your ways, and all your particular practices; and examine whether or no they are agreeable to the rules of your duty; that whatever you find you have been deficient in, or done amiſs, you may take the better care to rectify and amend, for the time to come *(c)*.

For which end and purpoſe, this following eaſy, but very profitable taſk, is recommended: namely, *two* or *three* times in the courſe of each day, to carry your thoughts back, and conſider

(a) Prov. iv. 5. John v. 39. 2 Tim. iii. 15. John xiii. 17.

(b) Tit. ii. 11—14. Math. vii. 21. Luke xii. 47.

(c) Pſal. iv. 4, and cxix. 59. Lam. iii. 40.

consider what you have been *thinking* or *doing*, and how you have spent your time. As for example; ask yourself,

When first I awaked, did I think upon God, and recommend myself to his almighty care and protection *(a)*? Did not worldly, or sinful thoughts, *first* take possession of my heart?

I was lately in such and such company; how, and after what manner did I behave myself? Were all my words and actions innocent, modest, and decent? Did I give no offence to God, or scandal to the world, by any thing which I either said or did on that occasion? *&c.*

Such questions as these, if you would constantly and seriously put home to your conscience, while things remain *fresh in your memory*, what a mighty influence they would have upon you, to restrain you from *evil*, and excite you to do that which is *good*, with joy and pleasure.

II. *Of particular Preparation.*

1. Whenever notice is given of the celebration of the holy communion, immediately resolve, by no means to miss that opportunity of commemorating the *sufferings*, and communicating in the *merits* of *your blessed Lord and Saviour (b)*.

2. In the midst of all your business, often call to mind, that *such a day*, you must not be absent from God's holy table; and therefore be very careful not to do any thing which may render you unfit for it.

3. At some seasons it is very necessary that every man should set a little time apart for the more strict and *particular examination* of his conscience. But where a man often receives the holy communion, and never misses any opportunity for it; I do not conceive that such a *particular examination* is every time absolutely necessary; nor have all men, at all times, leisure enough for it: But no man ought to receive the holy communion without *some previous examination* of himself. For the more easy and regular performance of this,

(a) This is entirely correspondent with what I said in one of my discourses on morning prayer.

(b) You see here the archbishop recommends frequent communion.

this, I would have you remember, that the whole duty of a *chriſtian* is reducible to three heads *(a)*, and every time that you receive the holy communion, you ought by all means, to put at leaſt theſe three queſtions ſeriouſly home to your conſcience.

1. Do I effectually ſhew my love to God, by a due honor and reſpect to him in all my thoughts, words, and actions?

2. Have I a true and ſincere love for myſelf: that is, do I love my *ſoul* better than my *body?* And am I more heartily concerned to ſecure my everlaſting happineſs in the world to come, than to compaſs my pleaſure or profit in this life?

3. Have I a real and ſincere love for all mankind, without exception? And do I avoid hurting any perſon by word or deed (where I can poſſibly avoid it)? And am I ready to do good to every one whatſoever, wherever I have ability and opportunity?

If you meditate on theſe *three* queſtions *ſeriouſly for a little time*, there is ſcarce any ſin that you have been guilty of, but it will occur to you.

4. When, by the examination of your conſcience, you have ſet your ſins in your view, uſe in your ordinary devotions, this, or ſome ſuch like confeſſion of them to God.

PRAYER.

O Moſt gracious God! I thy unworthy creature, humbly acknowledge my ſins before thee. Beſides thoſe which I have now recollected, I lie under the guilt of many more tranſgreſſions, which I am not able to recount or remember. I have committed many ſins, contrary to the motions of thy grace, and the light and conviction of my own conſcience; and therefore do moſt juſtly deſerve the ſeverity of thy wrath and indignation againſt me. But, Lord, I fly unto thee for mercy! For the ſake of Chriſt Jeſus, my Redeemer, be merciful to me, in the pardon of all my ſins; and ſo guide and aſſiſt me by thy good grace, that, for the time to come, I may be careful to abſtain from every evil thing; and keep a conſcience void of offence towards thee and towards mankind: This I beg, through the ſame Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

(a) Mat. xxii. 37, &c.

MOST merciful God, who haſt given thine only Son Jeſus Chriſt to die for our ſins: Grant me thy grace, I humbly beſeech thee, that I may never be unmindful, but always truly thankful for that ineſtimable benefit vouchſafed unto me by his death and ſufferings; and ſo fit and prepare me, O Lord, by the aſſiſtance of thy holy ſpirit, that both at this, and all other times, I may be rightly qualified to commemorate the paſſion of my bleſſed Redeemer, in that holy ordinance which he has appointed; and alſo thereby effectually to partake of that redemption which he has wrought for all mankind. This, I beg, through the ſame Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

Of Behaviour at the Holy Communion.

1. At the holy communion, as at all other times in the worſhip of God, ſtrive, as much as you can, to keep your mind intent and fixed upon what you are about; and lay aſide not only all wicked thoughts, but likewiſe all ſuch as are impertinent to the preſent buſineſs.

2. Take care to behave yourſelf with ſuch *outward* decency and compoſedneſs, as may be a ſufficient token of that *inward* devotion and reverence which you bear in your heart, without gazing about, or any way unneceſſarily moving your body, or whiſpering to any one that is near you, or doing any thing of the like nature.

3. While the ſervice is performing, join all along with the miniſter and congregation, with your heart and thoughts lifted up to God; and with your tongue alſo, where the liturgy requires that any thing ſhould be ſpoken aloud by the people; as in the Reſponſes, the Confeſſion, the Lord's Prayer, *&c.*

4. Take care, likewiſe, to avoid all affectation, and not to behave yourſelf in ſuch a manner, as if you had a mind to be taken notice of for a perſon of extraordinary devotion. For which reaſon, whatever private prayers or meditations you may have to offer to God, put them up in your thoughts alone, or let not your voice be heard, but when the public office requires it.

5. When you have received the bread, offer up this, or ſome ſuch ſhort ejaculation to God:

O God!

O God! grant that by the ſufferings of my dear Saviour, who was crucified for me, I may eſcape eternal ſufferings, and be made partaker of everlaſting glory!

And when you have received the cup, ſay thus in your heart:

O gracious God! grant that by the ſhedding of the blood of thy dear Son, I may obtain the remiſſion of all my ſins; and aſſiſt me, O God, to remember him with gratitude, praiſe, and adoration.

After leaving the Communion Table.

While the bread and wine are diſtributing to the reſt of the congregation, entertain yourſelf with ſuch meditations and prayers as theſe.

1. Bethink yourſelf what thoſe ſins are, to which you have been moſt inclined: and in the preſence of God, ſeriouſly and ſtedfaſtly renew your *reſolutions* of being *careful* to abſtain from them for the time to come.

2. Conſider, what opportunities you ordinarily have for the doing of any good works, and ſtedfaſtly purpoſe to be diligent hereafter in making uſe of them.

To this add the following Prayer.

MErciful God, aſſiſt me with thy grace and holy ſpirit, that I may always keep thoſe vows and good reſolutions, which thou haſt enabled me to make; that I may never return to any of my former ſins, but hereafter ſerve thee faithfully in the conſtant practice of virtue and religion, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

And here expreſs your *charity*, by putting up a prayer for all mankind, in this or the like form:

LORD, if it be thy gracious will, extend thy mercy and compaſſion unto all mankind. Enlighten the minds of thoſe that are ignorant, and move the wills of thoſe that are obſtinate, that they all may receive thy holy truth, and carefully live in the practice of it. Pardon my enemies, O Lord, and bring them, and all of us, through the whole world, to true repentance, that we may all live righteouſly here, and in the end, be happy with thee hereafter, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

Then entertain yourſelf with reading and meditating upon ſome ſelect portions of the holy ſcripture, until ſuch time as the miniſter is ready to proceed with the public office. I need not here tranſcribe any particular texts, but will leave you to make choice of ſuch as are moſt agreeable to you. If you ſhould be at a loſs, read *the hundred and nineteenth Pſalm*, where you will eaſily find proper matter enough to employ your devouteſt thoughts upon this occaſion.

After the Service.

When the ſervice is ended, and the congregation diſmiſſed, depart to your home or place of abode; and as ſoon as you have a convenient opportunity of retiring into ſome private place, firſt look back, and conſider whether or no, in the performance of this holy office, you have behaved yourſelf in all things as you ought to have done; and if you find that you have been any way ſhort or defective therein, reſolve to take better care for the time to come.

And then conclude with this or the like prayer:

LORD, I deſire to return my moſt humble and hearty thanks to thee, for all thy bleſſings, both ſpiritual and temporal, which thou haſt vouchſafed to me. At this time, particularly, I praiſe and bleſs thy holy name, for the opportunity which thou haſt this day given me of commemorating the death and paſſion of my bleſſed Redeemer, and alſo of partaking of his merits in the participation of that holy ordinance which he has appointed. Lord, pardon all the weakneſſes and defects which I have been guilty of in the performance of this great duty. And I beſeech thee aſſiſt me with thy grace, that in the whole courſe of my life I may ever be careful to fulfil and perform thoſe vows and reſolutions which I have made to thee, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

General Rule in regard to the Sacrament.

Endevor, as the occaſion ariſes, to call to mind what you have thought, and ſaid, and done, before and after the holy communion: And beg God to aſſiſt you, that you may remember your Saviour with conſtant gratitude, praiſe, and adoration. That it may conſtantly reſtrain you from all manner

manner of wickedneſs, upon the aſſault of any temptation, thus bethink yourſelf:

" *At ſuch a time I received the holy communion, and then I ſeriouſly reſolved, and ſolemnly promiſed to Almighty God, that I would heartily endevor, in all points, to live like a chriſtian. Shall I then, upon any account, lye, curſe, ſwear, talk profanely, or obſcenely, commit any ſin of uncleanneſs, ſteal, cheat, or do, or think, any manner of wickedneſs? No: God forbid! I have engaged myſelf to God to mend my life, and to be another ſort of perſon. And what can I expect, but wrath and indignation from him, if* knowingly *or* wilfully *I ſhould violate thoſe promiſes which I ſo deliberately and ſtedfaſtly made to him?*"

T. Thus far thou ſeeſt the archbiſhop has given thee and all his readers, plain and ſufficient inſtructions.

M. I hope I ſhall follow them; I ſee nothing which ſhould deter me from receiving the ſacrament; and I think no perſon who is come to my age, ſhould omit this chriſtian duty: Yet I know of many who are afraid of they know not what: They *will* not receive, leſt they ſhould happen to be unworthy in the ſight of God; and yet take no ſteps to make themſelves worthy.

T. So it is: they preſumptuouſly offend him by *neglecting* the duty which he hath ſo ſtrictly commanded, and ſupport themſelves in *one* wickedneſs by being guilty of *another*. This is all they *gain:* What the *loſs* will be, let the ſoul that offends tremble to think of!

M. Pray God I may never entertain ſuch *fooliſh* opinions, nor under a falſe notion of *humility*, be guilty of *preſumption*. —My Father, I know you would be glad to oblige me: I beg, if your buſineſs permits, that we may walk to-morrow: Your converſation will not make the leſs impreſſion on me. *I love walking.*

T. Thou knoweſt, my dear *Mary*, how happy I am when I contribute to thy ſatisfaction; but I muſt mind my buſineſs, or I ſhall not be able to pay my rent. To-morrow I ſhall be able to attend thee for an hour or two in the fields. There are ſome *graſs* lands in the walk which I propoſe to take that I muſt have an eye to.

TUESDAY.

TUESDAY.

CONVERSATION V.

The delights of rural ſcenes.

T. GOOD morning, my dear *Mary!* Are we to take a walk to-day, and ſee ſome of the fine proſpects we often talk of?

M. Every thing will appear the more charming to me, whilſt I enjoy the advantage of your diſcourſe.

T. Where love reigns, nothing is ſo delightful as converſation; and none more intereſting to the heart, or more pleaſing to heaven, than that of a father and a daughter united in the cauſe of virtue and religion. My maſter uſed to ſay, "*Speak*, that I may *ſee* thee;" intimating, that by converſation only we can diſcover the heart and inclinations. I wiſh I were more able to inſtruct thee; but I will act the part of a *friend*, and tell thee my thoughts with an honeſt freedom.

M. I think, my Father, that nothing beguiles the time ſo agreeably, as walking in a fine country in good weather, except the communication of our ſentiments to thoſe we love.

T. Look yonder, *Mary!* See that *ſheet of water*, now that the ſun ſhines on it: How it throws out its ſilver beams, and enlivens the objects around it! Where is the *tiſſue petticoat*, or any of the glittering dreſſes which I have ſeen at London, that equals this!—O my daughter, how glorious the beauties of nature are, compared to the *appearances* of that *tinſel greatneſs*, in which the *rich* excell us.

M. Let us ſtop and gaze a while!—Indeed, my Father, this *is* a fine ſight, and we ſee it *for nothing!*

T. For nothing but our *gratitude to heaven*, that we have eyes to behold the charms of this earth, and hearts to be thankful for the pleaſures it affords us.

M. Do you obſerve how ſweetly that river winds?

T. Yes: The former courſe of it hath been changed, by the gentleman whoſe houſe thou ſeeſt on that eminence; and what is more, his chief deſign was to delight his neighbors. Thoſe clumps of trees ſo beautifully diſpoſed, were planted with the ſame friendly view, and the owner rejoices in them, from the ſatisfaction which he gives to others.

M. Who is the gentleman?

T. Sir *George Friendly.*

Character of a good country gentleman.

M. Sir George! I have often heard you ſpeak of him. He muſt be happy himſelf in making others happy. Yon village, if I forget not, was compoſed of ragged tenements of dirt! How comes it that the houſes now look ſo neat and clean, with their little gardens, as it were, ſmiling in verdure?

T. Don't be ſurprized at any thing that is done well by a man of fortune, who is happy in his temper, and in heart a *real chriſtian.* Sir George has no vices that I know of, and looks down on the parade of the table and ſplendid equipages. He keeps no more domeſtics than he wants, except that he takes care of ſome of the children of his married ſervants. He ſaves no part of his income, except a few hundreds, yearly, that he may be never diſtreſſed for want of the power of aſſiſting the unfortunate. That village, which he lately built, is one of the leaſt of his works. He delights in the improvement of land, and beautifying the face of the country; but inſtead of pulling down cottages, and driving the inhabitants into great towns, or wearing them away for want of proper houſes, where to take their reſt in peace, he builds comfortable tenements, and lets them at ſmall rents. Thus he renders the huſbandman and laborer happy at their own fire-ſide, whilſt prattling babes reſt fondly on their knees, nor know the difference between their ſtate and the noiſe and pride of trade and opulency. Thus Sir *George* increaſes their number, whilſt he contributes to their happineſs; and, when ſoldiers and ſailors become neceſſary, he has ſo far provided for the defence of his country. O *Mary!* the time may come, when we may feel the want of hardy peaſants, fit for war as well as peace. All the laboring people in Sir *George*'s pariſh are ſure of employment,

ment, and therefore marry without fear or dread. As a proof of his ſtrength in numbers, his tenants, for ſome years paſt, have got in their harveſt, without being indebted to the Scotch or Iriſh. Indeed they ſometimes hire a few honeſt ſoldiers, who are quartered in the neighborhood, to aſſiſt them. They do this at Sir *George*'s recommendation, rather with a view to aſſiſt thoſe brave men, who fight for them occaſionally, than from any urgent neceſſity.

M. Is he not a very thoughtful conſiderate man?

T. Yes; but his thoughtfulneſs makes him the more gladſome, for he thinks to a good purpoſe. Benevolence is naturally joyful, and charity has no bounds! He does not ſtop at his own tenants, nor at his own pariſh: Wouldſt thou think it, *Mary?*—He has new paved the market-town at his own expence. Indeed, he agreed that every one who kept a horſe, ſhould bring five loads of fine gravel near his own door; and that every tenant of 5*l.* a year, ſhould break up his own pavement. On theſe light conditions he did this uſeful and good work, at the ſame time that he promiſed to repair and beautify their church, and he has been as good as his word.

M. You make me in love with his character: Pray does this good gentleman ever go to London?

T. I believe he was born there; but he has not viſited that monſter of a city for theſe three years paſt: he ſays he cannot afford to go, whilſt there is ſo much to be done in the country.

M. Are there many gentlemen in this neighborhood who are ſo good and charitable?

T. There are ſome very good gentlemen, but none equal to him that I know of. Thou muſt not imagine, *Mary*, that there are great numbers of ſuch people to be found, wert thou to wander round the world: Thank heaven that there are ſome. The number of thoſe, whoſe fortunes *enable* them to do ſuch things, is ſmall: I hope there are more good minds than large fortunes. There is no country in the world, *Mary*, where charity abounds more than in England, ſo far as regards money given in alms: but generous things may be done by men of moderate eſtates, provided

vided they attend to them themſelves, and underſtand what they are about. Our misfortune is, that the rich run up to London every winter, and contract ſuch a habit of diſſipation, that many do not like their own homes, even when they are very grand, and full of rural delights, but leaving their gardens and their fields for us to take care of, we improve their eſtates, whilſt they diſpoſe of the produce. How many might make a conſiderable figure here, by ſhewing a *good example*, and giving *us* the *beſt* inſtructions for leading an *honeſt* and *religious* life, *who are loſt in the crowd* in town. They complain of vice from the *bad* effects which they are ſenſible of; but do not *perceive* that their indolence and inattention are one great cauſe of it. 'Tis the ſame in this caſe as with the ſacrament, which we talked of yeſterday: If the lord or lady, the maſter or miſtreſs, are profligate or careleſs, their tenants and ſervants, mechanics and labourers, will be the ſame.

M. Alas, my Father! I wiſh the world were better; I hope I ſhall follow your example——But in regard to what you was ſaying, pray tell me if Sir *George*'s eſtate has more people on it than are found in the ſame compaſs of land belonging to his neighbours, if he has any method of encouraging marriage, beſides that of furniſhing employment to the indigent?

T. He is liberal in giving ſome hundreds, yearly, in ſmall portions to girls, who are moſt remarkable for their dutiful behaviour to their aged parents, their ſkill in the dairy, their good needle-work, their reading, writing, public and private devotion.

M. Is this attended with any good effects?

T. Very good: it raiſes an emulation who ſhall excell, ſo that a man is ſure of a wife, who, though ſhe ſhould not have any thing but her induſtry to depend on, brings a valuable portion in her virtue.

M. I think Sir *George* himſelf is married: pray what does his *lady* ſay to all this?

T. She *loves* her huſband; and in ſaying this, I ſay all: ſhe is a woman of good underſtanding, of a ſweet temper, and was bred up in the practical faith of *Chriſt*. Sir *George* conſults her in every thing. She is, as all wives ought to be,

Character of a good wife to a gentleman.

be, a *friend* to her husband. As she understands her religion, she rejoices at every opportunity of acting up to its precepts. Having every enjoyment that a lady of fortune and distinction can reasonably desire; she had rather see the overplus disposed of whilst she lives, than trust to its being spent after her death, she knows not how, nor by whom. The ample provision made for her, if she outlives Sir *George*, puts her above all mean tricks to save money, which he has no intention to save. Having a right sense of duty and affection to her husband, this also renders her as great an advocate for the poor as Sir *George* himself. The butler told me, he once heard his lady say, that she rather chose to sit down to four dishes, knowing that four poor families had each their dish, than have the eight dishes set before her. That she knew well, the bulk of mankind are poor; and chose to attend to the interest of the many, rather than the few; and to be instrumental to the happiness of a poor old woman, or a young one, than attend the drawing-room of a queen.

M. I believe there are not many *such* ladies; methinks I should be glad if I could get a sight of Lady *Friendly*: but may not her rule of charity be carried so far, as to send out *three* of *her four* dishes to the poor?

T. No: there is a measure in all things; and people must use their reason, and maintain a certain character and rank, or they will lose the power of doing the good which Providence hath assigned them. 'Tis not that Sir *George*, his lady, and friends, eat all that is set before them, even of *four* dishes; they have many servants to feed, who would be starved, if they were not employed by him or some other master.

M. I see that great people must live in some degree of magnificence, as it were, out of charity;—and that all general complaints of the unequalness in the condition of us mortals are foolish.

T. The great point with the rich, should be, rather to err on the charitable side, than to squander so much in vicious excess, as to have little or no portion of their wealth to distribute to the poor. Some are nobly charitable with five

hundred

hundred pounds a year, and others in diſtreſs with five thouſand. Many are ſlaves to pomp, and ſtuff their pillows with thorns, by their extravagancies, while their creditors lament their *hard* condition. I wiſh my Lord ——— would pay me for fifty quarters of oats, which I delivered into his ſtables three years ago!

M. Bleſs me! Is this poſſible? Then it is a misfortune to ſome people to be rich.

T. Rather ſay, to know not what to do with their riches. As the caſe now ſtands, he will be more diſpoſed to pay me than he was, the arms of the law being made longer. What we condemn in another, might, *under equal temptation*, be thy caſe or mine, therefore let us be *contented*, and walk in the road to that happineſs, which riches cannot give, nor poverty take away.

M. I ſuppoſe every neighbouring village rings with the praiſes of Sir *George* and his lady, who place their happineſs ſo little in ſumptuous living, rich cloaths, and a round of amuſements.

T. Their happineſs ariſes from *thinking well, and doing right*; they enjoy the pleaſure, but leave the *praiſe* to God.

M. How does Sir *George* behave to his ſervants?

Behaviour of a gentleman to his ſervants.

T. As a *man*, a *gentleman*, and a *chriſtian*. His chief concern is to conſult for their ſpiritual welfare, and to promote the good of their ſouls. For this purpoſe he entertains a young clergyman in his houſe, a man of learning, great purity of manners, and genteel behaviour, who officiates at prayer every night and morning, and occaſionally reads a ſermon. He has alſo added 20*l.* a year to the curacy of his pariſh, with the condition that the miniſter ſhall employ more time and diligence than could otherwiſe be expected from him, to examine into the ſtate of his pariſhioners, with reſpect both to their temporal and ſpiritual wants. This gentleman ſupplies the latter by familiar converſation and pious inſtruction; whilſt he lays before Sir *George* a particular account of their diſtreſſes, who never fails of communicating relief.

M. Does Sir *George* do any thing towards inſtructing the country people in general?

Inſtance of true zeal.

T. Yes; he has lately paid a handſome premium or reward of 50 *l.* which he had offered to the clergyman who ſhould preach the beſt and moſt uſeful ſermon on the ſubject of *death*; and likewiſe ſo much for the *ſecond*, and ſo much for the *third in merit*. That which he eſteemed the beſt, has been printed, and two thouſand copies diſtributed by his order, among ſuch as have ſenſe enough to conſider themſelves intereſted in the ſubject, and virtue enough to attend to it.

M. I am glad that he does not confine his goodneſs to his own houſhold; and that he conſiders the future as well as the preſent welfare of his fellow-creatures.

T. He clothes a number of poor boys and poor girls every ſecond year; on condition that they always appear tight and clean; and is particularly attentive, that the boys be taught to knit and ſpin, and the girls to knit, ſew, and ſpin, at a very early age, making theſe qualifications a condition of his bounty. Thus by the influence of rewards, he teaches them ſuch kind of induſtry, as will ſoon render his charity unneceſſary to them. In ſhort, he looks upon that day as loſt, in which he does no good; and never thinks it a reaſon, becauſe other people may happen to miſtake his motives, to alter his conduct in the minuteſt point.

M. What do thoſe perſons ſay of this gentleman, who differ ſo much from him in behaviour and temper?

T. Some of his rich neighbours, who, you have heard, are not of the ſame diſpoſition, think him a *Don Quixote* in humanity and charity: not that they condemn him for following his own inclinations; for that is the prevailing principle of their own conduct: but they are ſurprized at his taſte and manner of life; and probably not a little aſhamed that they *fall ſo ſhort of him.*

M. But what do *you* think, my Father?

T. Think, my dear! Why, in good truth, I think that he acts the part of an accompliſhed gentleman, and a ſincere chriſtian: he has no children to provide for; and if he had any, I dare ſay he would give them a *good* education rather than a *grand* and extravagant one; and ſuffer no unneceſſary expences to prevent his beneficence to the indigent. In

gene-

general the poor are provided for by our parish laws; but thou seest how voluntary acts eclipse the obligations we are bound to by law. Sir *George* spends his income; and if I were in his case, I hope I should follow his example.

M. Such a gentleman, I suppose, has no quarrels with his neighbours.

T. So far from quarrelling, which is an *art* many country gentlemen are very ingenious in learning, he is always contriving how to *oblige* them. He not only plants with a view to improve their prospects, but cuts down a tree, or opens an avenue for the same purpose. To some he sends plentiful streams of water, to others he distributes his fruit, and takes more pleasure in sending it to the table of a friend, than in seeing it at his own. If any difficulty or difference arises, he refers it immediately to arbitration, with such candor and acquiescence, as convinces his opponent of his good will and generosity, and makes every body ashamed of trespassing upon him.

M. What character had his father?

T. Sir *Thomas* died at about the age of threescore, after doing many good actions of the same kind. He was never wanting in giving good instructions to his son; exhorting him by his advice, as well as his example, to do that which is right in the sight of God. A little before his death, he sent for him; and in the presence of his servants, gathered mournfully round his bed, he said, "My son, I rejoice in thinking thou art inclined to virtue: and if thou shouldst really value thy dear Father's memory; if thou regardest thy country's good with an unfeigned love; if thou believest in thy great Prophet and Saviour Jesus Christ; and seekest to be happy in that eternity, to the verge of which I am arrived, look on the wealth which I leave thee as the trial of thy virtue. Thou must be my almoner, as well as thy own. To squander in vanity, or hoard in covetousness, are equally unworthy the honest man and the gentleman; for either way thou wilt deprive the miserable of that assistance, which thy God demands at thy hands. Let it be thy delight to succour and relieve them. Be to them as a father and a friend; be their guardian angel. Thus will thy life be glo-

rious,

rious, and thy end happy! In what canst thou find so high a gratification, as in *doing good*. Had I always acted with less regard to *custom*, the present trembling moments which remain of life, had been attended with a less mixture of anxiety; but I hope the merciful Father of mankind will forgive the great defects of my obedience; and accept the sorrow and repentance of my heart, for having fallen so far short of my duty. All that remains to me now, is to implore the divine mercy, and to resign myself to the will of God; to make my peace with him, and put my trust and confidence in the merits of Christ." Then turning to his servants, he said, "You, my humble friends, whom Providence has not encumbered with wealth, are not therefore the less capable of virtue. Be charitable in mind; faithful in servitude; obedient to the laws of your country; true disciples of your great Lord and Master. Read the scriptures, and consider them as the oracles of God; they will supply proper consolation under all the difficulties and afflictions of life, and make you wise unto salvation. I bid you all farewell! We may meet again, if the meeting of friends is any part of the happiness of the blessed. Farewel! farewel!—if so the Almighty has ordained—for ever!" Thus did the old gentleman take his leave.

M. What did Sir *George* say?

T. He promised, in the sight of heaven, and in the hearing of his servants, that he would never forget his dear father's dying words; declaring that he would constantly tread in the steps which had been marked out to him, and devote himself to the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind.

Charity displayed in funerals.

Sir *Thomas* was a man of inflexible probity; and though he often mourned, he sometimes laughed at the follies of mankind. Some people thought him *whimsical*, but his conduct rather indicated a contempt of customs, which clash with reason and common sense, than caprice or fancy, in which reason had no share. He used to say, as I have been often told by his butler, that a drunken man never owns himself to be intoxicated whilst he can stand upon his legs; nor a weak one to want judgment, whilst he can find

word to say: So every man is said to be in a sound mind when he is not raving. In the same manner a formal declaration of belief should be determined by deeds during life, not by words on a *death-bed*. He laughed at the funeral pomp of an undertaker's procession, guarded by a pack of ill-favoured unfeeling fellows, dressed in old rusty black, and armed with caps and truncheons. Caps, he said, were worn by Jockies, and truncheons were fit only for generals. Plumes of feathers, were proper enough for theatrical heroes, but he could not conceive what a private gentleman, much less a haberdasher of small wares, had to do with such trophies, on occasion of carrying a poor human body to a church-yard, to be served up as a feast for worms: adding, that he supposed vanity would flourish as long as the world endured; and as himself was not without his share, he begged he might be indulged in his own way; for he could not find any charm in thinking of a pompous funeral, sufficient to divert any *painful* thought of death.

M. Did he make a will?

T. Yes: It begins in the common form, recommending his soul in a solemn manner to God: and then he desires his son to consider it, as a part of his last *will*, to observe a strict obedience to the law of Christ.

With regard to his *funeral*, he directs that very little expence may be bestowed on it; and in the way beneficial only to the poor: and accordingly orders, that his coffin may not be ornamented; that the *pall* shall be a few yards of dark grey fine cloth, such as may be of use to the clergyman who performs the funeral service, to whom it is to be given, in lieu of a scarf;—that his coffin shall be carried by six men who have families, under the age of 50, labourers under his tenants, or porters; to each of whom he gives a dark blue coat of kersey, not exceeding the value of 5s. each. He used to say, that among the labouring poor, he found more *old women* living than *old men*; and more *young females* exposed to distress than *boys*: and therefore directed that eight women and six men, turned of 55 (the age which, from observation, he called old) should be clothed at the pleasure of his heir, from top to toe, not exceeding the

value of 40 s. each. And likewiſe that eight girls and ſix boys, from ten to thirteen years old, either orphans, or ſuch whoſe parents ſhould be in the moſt indigent ſtate, in his pariſh, be clothed from head to foot, not exceeding 25 s. each, and theſe twenty-eight perſons were to attend his corpſe. He further directs that (with permiſſion of the overſeers of the poor) the pariſh children may attend him, and ſing a dirge; in conſideration of which, he leaves 10 l. to them, for the purchaſe and diſtribution of a uſeful little book, intitled, *The Importance of a Religious Life*.

M. Was all this performed by the preſent Sir *Thomas*?

T. With a religious attention to his father's *will*, and an affectionate regard to his memory.

M. Were any remarks made upon this occaſion?

T. Some ſaid that old Sir *Thomas* had as much pride in his conceits, as *John* Duke of *Marlborough* might have had in the imaginary pomp of his funeral: But every body allowed that it was ſo much good done the poor.

M. How are we to judge of *pride* and *humility*, but from the actions of men? If every thing is to be done according to cuſtom, whilſt there are ſo many fooliſh and wicked cuſtoms, how can men grow wiſer or better?

T. Not eaſily indeed. The wiſe man ſays, that "all is vanity;" but ſurely it is a vain and a wicked thing to impute to a bad motive, what is in itſelf good and uſeful to human kind. Sir *Thomas*, in his life, ſhewed great regard to the *poor*; and we may allow that, in the laſt ſcene of it, he acted with the ſame kind of attention, and conſidered *their* welfare, rather than indulged his own vanity. Every man is a fool or a coward that offers incenſe to the pride of other people, ſo far as to give up his own judgment, implicitly following their opinion of right, in preference to his own.

M. Did you attend this good gentleman's funeral?

T. Yes: for altho' I was not his tenant, he called on me often, and ſhewed a particular regard for me, by making me little preſents, and by giving me ſuch good advice on every occaſion, as won my heart. Oft has he taken thee upon his knee, and fondled thee, ere thou couldſt know

know to whom thou wert obliged for ſuch tenderneſs. He uſed to ſay, that as he wanted nothing of others, but their *good will*, he ſought thoſe who wanted him.

There is one circumſtance in his conduct, which I ſhould not forget to tell thee. Upon occaſion of ſome charitable gifts, which he made to his pariſh, he inſiſted, as a condition, that no muſic ſhould be played upon their organ, but ſuch as had been examined by two of the ableſt maſters, and approved of by the biſhop of the dioceſe; for he held it as a rule not to be departed from, that he went to church to worſhip God, and not to dance a jig: nor to have any thoughts excited, but thoſe of devotion. He obſerved, that the harmony which may be very pleaſing and warrantable at a muſical meeting, may be very diſpleaſing and unwarrantable at church: That he ſaw no reaſon why an *organiſt*, who may happen to be a thoughtleſs fellow, ſhould play what muſic he pleaſes, more than a *miniſter* ſay what prayers he pleaſes; and that rule and order ought to be deemed as eſſential to divine worſhip in one caſe, as in the other.—Thou mayſt perceive how much he ſtrove to maintain the empire of reaſon and religion in the world; and not to ſubmit to cuſtoms, which he conceived to be inconſiſtent with both.

M. Indeed I think he was in the right: I have heard the organiſt at our town, play as if we came to be diverted, inſtead of offering up our hearts in prayer to God.

T. Bleſſed as he was with truth, goodneſs, and conſtancy of mind, his heart never ſeemed to wear a diſguiſe. He was a friend to human kind; and left this world, where ſin and ſorrow reign, in the peaceful manner which I have related. He was as a good man; I lament him as my beſt friend and benefactor; and I could not with-hold myſelf from diſcharging the laſt debt of gratitude with the ſame religious reverence, as if he had been my own father. I followed cloſe his ſable bier: indeed the whole village marched in ſolemn ſilence, interrupted only by the ſighs which burſt from many an aching heart. When his body was depoſited in the earth, I paid the duty of an honeſt friend: I ſtrewed *his duſt* with duſt, and ſaw the ſtone laid over his grave. He uſed often to ſmile at proud trophies of monumental

flattery, without railing at them. He thought they might be of ſervice with regard to people in public life, but wiſhed to ſee *morality* and *religion*, as well as *humility* inſcribed on marble; and therefore directed that theſe words only might be cut on the tomb-ſtone which covered his grave:

Here lieth interred, all that was mortal, of a man who felt for human miſery, and ſtrove to prevent, and to relieve it.

Reader,

enquire no farther: the Lord have mercy on his ſoul and thine!

Why doſt thou look ſo ſad, *Mary?*

M. I catch your thoughts, my Father. Your tale is affecting, and fills my heart with a painful, but not diſpleaſing ſadneſs.

T. Thy ſorrow is graceful. He was thy friend alſo; and had he lived, he might have ſhewn his regard by many acts of kindneſs and good will. The *necklace* thou haſt on came from his hand, and ſo did ſeveral of the good books in which thou findeſt ſuch improvement and delight: ſome of them were written by himſelf.

M. I ſhall love and honour his memory, and be more particularly attentive to thoſe good books, that I may contemplate the *ſoul* of the man, and attend to his advice, now that his body is duſt and aſhes.—But pray, my dear Father, tell me what belongs to *me*, in regard to charity, which makes ſo glorious a figure? You have given me the higheſt pleaſure in your account of theſe good and worthy gentlemen, who, compared to myſelf, are angels or miniſters of good ſent from heaven!

True notion of charity explained.

T. Alas, *Mary*, it is not rank, nor condition in life, nor the *quantity of good done*; it is the heart which makes the difference. Thou haſt been taught that *God is no reſpecter of perſons:* The Almighty hath indeed placed thee in an humble ſtation; but not humbler, with regard to the *riches* of this world, than was thy great Lord and Maſter, and his followers. *They* were not always provided with the neceſſaries of life as thou art; nor did they live in peace and ſafety as thou haſt done. I have frequently heard well intentioned

tentioned perſons complain how little was in *their* power, becauſe they fooliſhly compared themſelves to people born to great fortunes: Theſe might as well compare themſelves to the princes of the earth: and to whom are *princes* to compare themſelves? They are but *men*, of like paſſions and infirmities as ourſelves; and they cannot be truly happy, but as they are the inſtruments of happineſs to others, in proportion to their ability and power. Do thou diſcharge the duties of thy ſtation, and *they* cannot poſſibly do more in theirs.

M. Some people think, that becauſe they cannot do a great deal of good, therefore they need not endeavour to do any.

T. This is a very falſe kind of concluſion. They do not conſider, that every friendly and kind office is charity: as a proof of this, let any one conſult his own heart, if it does not leave a ſweet remembrance behind. It is impoſſible to do good, and not be pleaſed with doing it: To be conſcious of the integrity of our intentions in promoting the welfare of our fellow-creatures, is to have confidence in God, which of all others is the greateſt bleſſing.

M. Do you think that thoſe underſtand their religion as chriſtians, who, being rich, are negligent with reſpect to the relief of the miſerable?

T. The wealthy have generally been taught their duty; and when they neglect it, the evil does not ariſe ſo much from ignorance as thoughtleſſneſs. Some, indeed, have been ſo neglected by their parents, they are but ill acquainted with the conditions of the goſpel: if they conſidered that *mercy* is better than *pomp*; they would rather relieve the wants of others, than eat off of plates of gold.

M. What do you think is the greateſt *trial* of our charity?

T. I think the greateſt trial is when people are repeatedly inſulted in their perſons, or artfully deprived of their property: or when the cauſe of the fatherleſs and widow is deſpiſed; or the public injured by the vanity or injuſtice of others. In ſuch caſes, honeſt men of warm tempers are apt to think themſelves warranted to reſent and reproach.

M. And are they not ſo? Will you give me leave to aſk you, if you ever found yourſelf in this ſituation?

T. Alas, my daughter, I have *often* erred: but as *charity beareth all things*, there can be no exception in the caſes I have mentioned: if we mean to conform our lives to the peaceful precepts of our divine religion, we muſt ſhew our charity moſt, where we are moſt apt to depart from it. If *charity hopeth all things*, we muſt hope that the offender will repent; and that we ſhall be the better for the patience and forgiveneſs we exerciſe.

M. I always thought that you was naturally patient and reſigned.

T. My reaſon and religious principles teach me to be ſo; and I have, by diſcipline, time, and obſervation of myſelf, nearly conquered a temper and diſpoſition naturally fiery and impetuous. Yet I have oftener triumphed over my enemies or opponents by gentleneſs and moderation, than by giving way to the bent of my temper. There are many caſes, in which the turn and diſpoſition of our minds prevail, which are not imputed to the want of charity, ſo much as they are to pride and anger. Peeviſhneſs and froward humours, harſh or unhandſome expreſſions, whatever the provocation may be, are offences againſt charity: but when we proceed to heavy reproaches and fierce reſentments, we unavoidably ſtand *condemned* at her tribunal.

M. What is one to do under a conſciouſneſs of ſuch offences?

T. Pray to God *(a)* for *charity* to avoid falling again; and be ſo much the more watchful of thyſelf. Next to the not erring,

(a) For Humility and Charity.

O almighty and eternal God, the tender Father of mankind, and the bountiful giver of all that we can poſſeſs or enjoy, teach me, I beſeech thee, ſo to uſe the things of this world, that they may never riſe in judgment againſt me. Grant that I may delight in performing every office of kindneſs and humanity; and whilſt I pity the diſtreſſed, and comfort the afflicted, I may conſider every one as my neighbour, and compaſſionate their frailties and evil doings. Thou, Lord, who liveſt in

erring, is being conſcious of a fault, and endeavouring to correct it. Thou ſeeſt this hath no connection with riches, except that there is ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places, and that the wealthy are moſt tempted to this kind of uncharitableneſs.

The miſer, of all characters in the world, is the moſt contemptible, and the moſt hated. And what is plenty amidſt the frowns and contempt of the world, but a ſplendid kind of miſery? Beyond the *real uſe* of riches, of which a part ſhould be *devoted* as alms, what is the reſt but mere conceit, or the madneſs of the brain?

M. What is the meaning of the proverb, *Charity begins at home?*

T. This regards thoſe circumſtances wherein the abſolute *neceſſaries* of life are required for ourſelves: and then it is not improper to ſay "charity begins at home," for the ſame reaſon that ſelf-preſervation is the firſt law, or leſſon that nature teaches us: Happy would it be, if we applied it to the conſideration of a future ſtate!

M. If charity depends ſo much on the temper and good diſpoſition of the mind, I fear there are many people not capable of it.

T. Why ſo? The tempers and inclinations of chriſtians muſt be controlled by the precepts and commands of *Chriſt*, not partially, but in every inſtance: and if ſuch perſons will not lay themſelves under reſtraints, as it regards their *charity*, they will hardly do it in any other inſtance. In the ſame degree that we want charity, we are deficient in all other chriſtian graces. The general *habit of charity* is what we ought to cultivate in our hearts, as eſſential to our happineſs in both worlds. It is obvious, from our ſocial and dependant

in thy holy temple, before whom the greateſt of the children of men ſtand in awful ſilence, teach me to bear indignities and ſcorn, evil treatment and reproach, with patience and reſignation to the diſpenſations of thy providence. Give me a conſtant habit of pity and forbearance; and that doing to others, as I would they ſhould do unto me, I may offer up the incenſe of obedience to thy commandments. This, I beg, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, who ſuffered with patience, even unto death, and redeemed the world by his blood!

dependant ſtate, as well as from the apparent corruption of our nature, and conſequently from our numberleſs infirmities, that charity is neceſſary to our well being. I have often heard my maſter give it as his opinion, that our *civil*, as well as *religious* liberties, are founded on *charity*. This is the rock on which the chriſtian world builds its happineſs; and wherever it is thrown down, we find ourſelves overwhelmed with miſery and confuſion. If thou, my daughter, lookeſt on all the world round thee with good will, and good intentions, thou art *charitable* to all the world; and in return, the earth will ſmile on thee, and thou wilt rejoice.

M. Yours is joyful doctrine! I remember the parable of the poor widow and her mite: Her *inclination* ſurely was very good!

T. The parable is introduced to ſhew how much depends on the mind: And as the tree is known by its fruit, good minds will ſhew good works; and thoſe who are poſſeſſed of this world's goods, will give alms, which are often of ſuch conſequence to the miſerable, that they would periſh without them. And do thou carry it ever in thy thoughts, that the more prudent thou art, the more able thou wilt always be, to aſſiſt any one who is in particular diſtreſs, being a friend, acquaintance, or neareſt of kin. Every body has ſome power; thy little contribution may be uſeful and acceptable in his ſight, who ſees the heart.

M. But if it happens that I ſhould not have any thing which I can ſpare, will God accept the thoughts of my heart?

T. My dear *Mary*, I have juſt told thee, that charity ſits enthroned in the heart! A *tear* offered up to *miſery*, where only a *tear* can flow, will be pleaſing to the *tender* Father of mankind, who, in ſuch caſes, accepts the *will* for the *deed*.

M. Every body then may be charitable!

T. If it were not ſo, how could God require every one to be charitable? The duty of *charity* is univerſal; it is the *bond that cements all other virtues*; for the ſame reaſon it doth not conſiſt alone in *giving alms*, becauſe every one has not alms to give. There are many caſes in which we can do good by the work of our *hands*, although our pockets

ſhould

ſhould be empty. Kind words, as I have told thee, are charities; and indeed they ſometimes heal the wounds of the heart beyond all the power of wealth, or the arts of phyſic. He that is ſenſible of evil himſelf, will conſider how other men are ſenſible alſo, and from hence become charitable in thought, word, and action. To be *truly good*, and yet refuſe making others as happy as we can, is a contradiction; for *goodneſs* itſelf conſiſts in promoting the welfare of others. To help thoſe who are in no condition to help themſelves, is a *Godlike* virtue.

M. Is it better, do you think, to be of a generous mind, of the number of thoſe who ſtand in need of relief, than of a hard-hearted diſpoſition in great plenty?

T. Yes. I hope *thou* thinkeſt ſo: for what will plenty avail with *ſuch* a heart? Whereas the bleſſings annexed to good and charitable minds, are great in this world, and they open to us the proſpect of a glorious immortality. Charity, as underſtood by true chriſtians, makes men moderate and juſt, candid and obliging, watchful to do all the good, and avoid all the evil poſſible. That we may be very *charitable* without having any thing to give; and very *uncharitable*, and yet even give our *bodies* to be burnt, is as true as the ſcriptures written by St. *Paul*. And yet it is no leſs true, that *alms* coming from the heart, are a kind of ſpiritual incenſe which aſcends to heaven!

M. And is not the *compaſſion* which we feel at the ſight of miſery, of the ſame nature, in the ſight of God?

T. Yes: I believe he accepts it as ſuch, when we can do nothing but compaſſionate.

M. O my Father, I feel the force of your words, and the joy of thinking how eaſy it is for a *good mind* to be charitable!

T. Do thou then cultivate a *good mind*, and make it bring forth the fruits of charity. I think, *Mary*, *charity*, as comprehending *chriſtian love*, is ſo truly the bond of ſociety, that the neglect of it is the *cauſe* of almoſt all the *miſery* in the world. On the other hand, its pleaſures and advantages are no leſs noble, large, and extenſive. What can exceed the

pleaſure

pleaſure of ſeeing others made *happy*, except the making them ſo by our own means?

M. But do we, by taking a ſhare in the *miſeries* of others, render their wretchedneſs the more ſupportable?

T. That is a queſtion thine own heart may eaſily reſolve. When haſt thou told me any of thy little ſorrows, and didſt perceive how much my heart ſympathized with thine, that thou felteſt not a relief like a balm to a wound; not becauſe of the pain I might feel for thee; but that thou didſt forget thy ſorrows in thinking of my love and ſympathy.

M. I have often felt a *pleaſing relief* without thinking of the reaſon of it—But can you recommend to me any particular manner, wherein I can exerciſe my charity?

T. There is one kind of charity, *Mary*, which requires no money, and yet it is of the higheſt importance to mankind. I mean that of making *peace* among neighbours, friends, and acquaintance. By this we ſometimes get credit with the world; if we act with judgment: But what is infinitely better, we gain the bleſſing promiſed to the makers of peace. *Good advice* may be a great charity, if thou canſt perſuade the offenders or offended, to *take* it; or a *good book*, if they will *read* it.

M. But how can I, being in a ſtate of ſervitude, find *time* to do any ſuch kind offices, were I qualified to do them? My firſt duty is to my miſtreſs!

T. True: nor ſhouldſt thou "be righteous over much to deſtroy *thyſelf*." Intemperate zeal, and neglect of moral duties lead to folly and madneſs: But theſe are out of the queſtion. I am adviſing thee upon the principles of ſober ſenſe and reaſon, ſupported by the precepts of our divine religion. If thou art ready to do good, Providence will befriend thee with *time* to do it in: and the more thou doeſt, the more thou wilt be able and willing to do; and remember it was one part of the character of thy great Lord and Maſter, that he went about doing good.

M. I hear my miſtreſs is a lady much inclined to offices of piety and humanity: I will intreat her leave to inform her of what I know to be true, in regard to miſery and diſtreſs.

T. I think

T. I think thou wilt do well: ſhe will judge of what ſhe ought to do. I hope ſhe "will not deſpiſe the cauſe of her "*man* or *maid* ſervant." She knows that "he who faſhion-"ed her in the womb, faſhioned *them* alſo:" and therefore "will not with-hold her bread from the fatherleſs, who are "dying with hunger: nor behold thoſe who are periſhing "for want of clothing, expire at her gates. She will not "make *gold* her confidence: the land will not cry againſt "her, nor the furrows thereof complain; but ſhe will have "mercy on the poor."

M. Happy ſhall I be indeed, to ſerve a miſtreſs who anſwers this deſcription!

T. Where people can *afford*, there are many more duties incumbent on them than they are generally aware of. Providence hath ſo ordered things, that the ties of blood operate ſtrongly on the heart, and ſo do the cuſtoms of the world founded on thoſe ties. "*Brethren* and *help* are againſt "the time of trouble, yet *alms* ſhall deliver more than them "both." Courteſy and kindneſs, as I have told thee, are frequently of great uſe; but there are times when only the wealthy can give effectual relief. Whether we conſider the liberal conduct of the rich or poor, every *event* of life, every *thought* conſpires to remind us of our being *accountable* creatures. The education which thou haſt had in the church thou art a member of, and the principles of pure religion rooted in thy mind, will, I hope, make thee always conſtant in the way of *truth*. Read the ſcriptures with candour, and not as thoſe who, affecting to be wiſe, make one part claſh with another, and bewilder themſelves. Be regular in thy prayers at *home*, and in *public*: and frequent the *table of the Lord*. When thou canſt do it to effect, and with good manners, remember it is as eſſential a part of *charity*, to warn people of danger to their *ſouls*, as it is to preſerve their *bodies*. This is plain, from the uniform conduct of our Saviour. Decency and prudence muſt always be conſidered as duties; but faſhion cannot alter the nature of good and evil. Now, my dear *Mary*, I will let thee into a ſecret which all the world ſhould know, but they are not thoughtful enough to conſider it: Thou canſt not

eaſily miſtake thy way to heaven, whilſt thou remembereſt, that whatever carries thee beyond the bounds of *charity*, drives thee back into the dominions of folly and iniquity: and all thy fond conceits of virtue will be as a *tinkling ſymbol!* Want of charity is the rock on which ſo many millions have run, when they fondly imagined themſelves to be in a *fair courſe*. If thou meaneſt to deſerve the glorious name of a *chriſtian*, endeavour always to be calm as a ſummer's ſea, and gentle as its mildeſt breezes; ready to relieve the diſtreſſed; zealous for thy great maſter's honour! Examine into the circumſtances of his life, with care, and ſhew thy love for him by thy obedience to his precepts: all other inſtructions, compared to them, are light in the balance. Thou wilt find it, in the New Teſtament, moſt clearly marked out *(a)*. Keep thine eye on this model in every action of thy life; it will give thee more comfort and joy in the end, than volumes of other reading, or all the pleaſures the earth can furniſh.——*Remember* this, my daughter, and be *true* to thine own heart, thou wilt not then be falſe to man or woman. Forget not, I beſeech thee, that it is charity, as ſeated in the mind, which gives every good action a pleaſing

(a) Inſtances of the life of our Saviour propoſed to imitation, from Burkitt's Expoſition of the New Teſtament, at the cloſe of his remarks on St. *John*'s Goſpel, where thoſe who are poſſeſſed of this uſeful book, may find proper comments on theſe inſtances of our Saviour's life.

1. His early piety. *Luke* xi. 46, 47.
2. — obedience to his earthly parents. *Luke* ii. 51.
3. — unwearied diligence in doing good. *Acts* x. 38.
4. — humility and lowlineſs of mind. *Mat.* xi. 29.
5. The unblameableneſs and inoffenſiveneſs of his life and actions. *Matt.* xix. 27.
6. His eminent ſelf-denial. *Phil.* ii. 7, 8.
7. — contentment in a low and mean condition in this world. *Luke* ix. 58.——*Phil.* iv. 11.
8. — frequent performance of the duty of private prayer. *Luke* vi. 12.——*Mark* i. 35.
9. — affectionate performance of the duty of praiſe and thankſgiving. *Matt.* xi. 25.——*John* xi. 41.

10. His

pleaſing colour, and every good word a ſweetneſs of ſound. Forget not, O my daughter, to carry conſtantly in thy mind, that *charity* will endure when *time* itſelf ſhall ceaſe. The earth, and all that we ſee of the objects around us, even the *heavens*, which are the canopy of it, will paſs away! Faith will be ſwallowed up in ſight, and hop will ceaſe with enjoyment: but *charity* is ſo divine and pure in its nature, that it will conſtitute a part of the joys of heaven.

10. His compaſſion towards thoſe who were miſerable, and in diſtreſs, *Matt.* xx. 34.
11. — ſpiritual, entertaining, and uſeful diſcourſe. *Luke* xiv. 7. xxiv. 13.
12. — free, familiar, ſociable behaviour. *Mat.* xi. 19.—*Luke* v. 29.
13. — patience under ſufferings and reproaches. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21, 22.
14. — readineſs to forgive injuries. *Luke* xxiii. 34.
15. — laying to heart the ſins, as well as ſufferings of others. *Mark* iii. 5.
16. — zeal for the public worſhip of God. *John* ii. 17.
17. — glorifing his Father in all he did. *John* xvii. 4.
18. — impartiality in reproving ſin. *Mat.* xxii. 23.
19. — univerſal obedience to his Father's will, and chearful ſubmiſſion to his Father's pleaſure. *Matt.* xxvi. 29.
20. — laws and practice of univerſal holineſs, both in heart and life. *Luke* iv. 34.

WEDNESDAY.

CONVERSATION VI.

WELL, *Mary*, wert thou pleaſed with our walk yeſterday? I hope it has not baniſhed from thy mind any uſeful part of our former converſations?

Notion of philoſophy and religion.

M. I was highly delighted, my Father; and ſo far from loſing any good thought by it, I felt how much the conſiderations of religion, and the characters of good men, give a pleaſing colour and reliſh to every thing, in the ſame manner, as a view of the glorious works of God, delight my ſenſes, and captivate my heart.

T. Why, child, thou talkeſt like a philoſopher!

M. A philoſopher! That is a character to which I fear I have no pretenſions; indeed I ſcarce underſtand what it means, though I apprehend it ſignifies a virtuous perſon.

T. I have heard my maſter ſay, that a *philoſopher* is, properly ſpeaking, one that ſincerely *loves* wiſdom, and therefore is ſuppoſed to *practiſe* it.

M. I love wiſdom ſincerely; but I ſhall not take the title upon myſelf, for our neighbours would laugh at me for the *name*, though they could not but reſpect me for the virtue it implies.—But, my dear Father, the character I mean to aſpire after is that of a *good chriſtian*; and I have been thinking continually on what you ſaid, in regard to the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, which appears to be ſo neceſſary, that as I believe there would be no religion amongſt us, if there was no *ſabbath-day* kept holy, ſo I think that the *chriſtian ſabbath* cannot be more neceſſary than the remembrance of *Chriſt*: And if the particular manner in which he hath commanded us to remember him is the beſt, as it muſt be, becauſe he has commanded it, then I conclude that my *obedience* is as neceſſary in the one caſe as in the other.

T. Mary,

T. Mary, I moſt heartily rejoice to hear thee reaſon ſo well, and to find thou haſt profited ſo much by the good *archbiſhop's inſtructions*, and the advice which I have given thee. Go on and proſper! I hope thy *practice* will correſpond with thy opinion, and that thou wilt conſider the neglect of this holy ordinance, in people who ſeem to be religious and conſcientious in doing their duty in other reſpects, as thou wouldſt the conduct and behaviour of them, who are very ready to obey ſome of the commandments of God, which do *not* claſh with their *favourite* paſſions, but take the liberty of breaking others, which are not agreeable to them.

M. Is not a diſinclination to real piety at the bottom of this?

T. There can be no doubt of it. But let us enquire a little further, *Mary*, and guard againſt abuſes and errors, even on the pious ſide.

M. Abuſes and errors on the pious ſide! Is not the inſtitution plain and ſimple, and eaſy to be underſtood? Can any be ſo differently affected, that the ſame thing which makes one good, can make another evil? *Superſtition.*

T. I now ſpeak of religion in general. *True* religion *is*, and *was*, and *ever will be*, the ſame. But *men* are apt to differ according to their education; the goodneſs or badneſs of their hearts, their humility, or their pride; and from the ſtrength or weakneſs of their judgment. And as we are ſurrounded by evils of ſo many kinds, my love for thee, joined to my experience of the world, prompt me to put thee on thy guard. Thou art young, *Mary*, and not aware, that even *virtues*, carried beyond their proper bounds, degenerate into *vices*. If we neglect or miſapply the powers we are endued with, and which were given to direct us, it will be no wonder if we overlook the line of duty, and ſtray into the paths of error and deluſion. A pious diſpoſition, not reſtrained by reaſon, is apt to inflame the paſſions, and excite extravagant raptures; which, though they are but the natural effects of the imagination, have been ſometimes taken for *divine impulſes*, and ſupernatural communications. This conceit gives a tincture of wildneſs to all the

thoughts

thoughts of the heart, and people become ripe for any thing which a diſtempered mind can ſuggeſt to them. The ſoul being ſick, and out of order, often falls a prey to *exceſſive fear*, or *bold preſumption*: the firſt takes the name of *ſuperſtition*; and the laſt of *enthuſiaſm*.

M. What is *ſuperſtition*?

T. I take it to conſiſt in confuſed and falſe notions of *God* and of *virtue*; and falſe apprehenſions concerning a *future ſtate*. This has a very bad effect on the minds of ſome perſons, in drawing off their thoughts from things the moſt important and uſeful, and fixing them on ſuch as are at beſt trifling and ridiculous. Some ſee an *omen*, or *evil prognoſtic* in every circumſtance: To their *fooliſh* imaginations, the croaking of a *frog*, or a *raven*, are very alarming; and the ticking of a ſpider, or other inſect, vulgarly called a *death watch*, frightens them out of their little wits. They do not conſider that all watches are death watches, in as much as every tick brings us ſo much the nearer to our grave.

M. Is this ſuperſtition? Then ſome of our good neighbours are ſuperſtitious; for I have often ſeen them diſturbed at the overthrow of a little ſalt upon a table, or the placing of knives and forks acroſs.

T. And if there happen to be juſt *thirteen* in number in a company, they make it a reaſon for believing one of them will die within the courſe of the year; and not knowing who it will be, they all imagine what they pleaſe, and theſe poor creatures thus take pains to torment themſelves.

M. I have obſerved how ſome people are given to *forboding* of evil. Forgetting the divine admonition, "that "ſufficient for the day are the evils thereof," they are continually tormenting themſelves with anxious fears. An hour's delay in the return of a huſband, a brother, or a ſon, whom they love, puts them into an agony. It forebodes evil; and they ſuffer, as if the evil was really come upon them.

T. If this be not *ſuperſtition*, I am ſure it is folly. There are thouſands of follies and weakneſſes in the world, which grow from a ſuperſtitious diſpoſition. It is hard to ſay whether there be moſt *folly* or *madneſs* in this; but when it

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is indulged, it certainly argues a diſtruſt of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God: for how can we ſuppoſe that the all-wiſe ruler of the world, will diſcover any of his deſigns to man, by means ſo trifling and inſignificant; or torment them by doubts and anxieties, founded on ſuch trivial circumſtances.

M. Is it *ſuperſtition* by which girls are induced to liſten to *fortune-tellers*, and give credit to their idle ſtories?

T. It is one kind of ſuperſtition, and indeed a very wicked one: But the effects of it are much more ſo, where men are influenced by it to propagate falſe doctrines, and by repreſenting *falſehood* as *truth*, and *vice* as *virtue*, lead the *unwary* into great miſchief, and ſometimes into deſtruction. *Superſtition* roots up the foundations of religion; for it ſuppoſes good actions and good intentions to be no ſufficient ſecurity, but places it in vain ceremonies and unprofitable rites. The glory of our Creator is diſplayed in ſeeking the happineſs of his creatures; whereas *ſuperſtitious* fears deſtroy the reliſh and comfort of life, and render our being miſerable. Thou mayſt eaſily conclude, that any exerciſes, tho' called *religious duties*, which tend to the *deſtruction* either of our *health*, or our *peace of mind*, are not of the nature of true religion; for God, who is the righteous and merciful Father of mankind, cannot lay any ſuch burthens on us as will hurt us.—Superſtition, in ſome countries, has been conſidered as a crime meriting puniſhment; and there have been times, when ſuperſtitious perſons were condemned to faſt a month in priſon.—I have heard my maſter ſay, that when the famous Ruſſian emperor *(a)* came to his throne, he found his people in a barbarous ſtate of ignorance. Some of them had conceived a ſuperſtitious reverence for their long beards. They knew that the Almighty, in alluſion to his eternity, is in ſome part of the ſcriptures called the *antient of days*; and as beards make people look old, ſo forſooth they *would* wear their beards. And when orders came to oblige them to cut them off, and with them their ſuperſtition, a number of men ſhut themſelves up in a houſe, and ſet

(a) Peter the Great.

ſet fire to it, chuſing rather to periſh in the flames themſelves had lighted, than part with their beloved beards.

M. Strange folly indeed! But what do you think is the *chief cauſe* of ſuperſtition?

T. A weak and diſtemper'd brain, or a bad conſcience; and its foundation ſeems to be laid in the fear of puniſhment after death. They who think juſtly, conſider that it is *neceſſary* to die, and that judgment will follow; and that ſuch conſiderations require all the powers of the mind, and therefore to make them a reaſon for diſturbing life with vain apprehenſions, is acting a very fooliſh, if not a wicked part.

M. Will a virtuous life ſecure us againſt ſuch notions and opinions?

T. Keep innocency, and do the thing that is right, and thou wilt never diſtruſt the goodneſs of God, who "gives "us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our "hearts with food and gladneſs." He who furniſhes ſuch a ſupply of neceſſaries to make the journey of life not only *comfortable* but *pleaſant*, will never torment thee with vain thoughts and fantaſtic fears. If no unruly paſſion, or anxious wiſh diſquiets thee, thou wilt not liſten to idle ſtories. The converſation of every neighbour will afford thee pleaſure in proportion as they are united with thee, in the common love of God and virtue. "The voice of joy "and health is in the dwellings of the *righteous*," but folly and iniquity are in the habitations of *fools*.

M. I am truly ſenſible of this; but if any ſuch fooliſhneſs or vice ſhould have taken hold of any of my friends, and I have my eye on ſome ſuch, what advice ſhall I give them?

T. Juſt what thou ſhouldſt take, in the ſame ſituation, namely, *to live a virtuous life*, to uſe their reaſon, to obey the commandments, and to pray to God for aſſiſtance *(a)*. In ſome

(a) O *eternal God*, who haſt the hearts of men in thy hand, and turneſt them whitherſoever thou wilt, inſpire me, I beſeech thee, with a lively ſenſe of *thy perfections*, and of *my dependence* on thee; that I may never indulge any apprehenſions inconſiſtent with my duty to thee; but that being ſteady and reſolved to walk in the paths of virtue and

true

ſome caſes thou mayſt laugh thy companions out of their fancies. Tell them to conſider what *real virtue* is; and warn them of their danger in miſtaking ſuch *folly* and *ſin*, for *virtue*. And do *thou* reſt aſſured, my daughter, that *virtue* will repel fear, and true courage make life joyful. When *fear* is founded in a ſenſe of guilt, amendment of life only can ſubdue it; and convert it into the genuine *fear of God*. Therefore be on thy guard, and ſuffer no ſuch evils to approach thee.

M. I have generally obſerved, that people who are apt to entertain theſe conceits, are of a melancholy turn.

T. Thou mayſt eaſily conceive that *ſuperſtition* leads to *melancholy*, which is an evil no leſs to be avoided; for it is apt to ſpy out misfortunes which never come: it *invites* thoſe that will come; and it aggravates them when they are arrived. In effect it runs to meet thoſe calamities, which probably by care and caution we might *ſhun*, or by reſolution *conquer*. *Melancholy.*

M. Are *ſuperſtition* and *melancholy* ſo nearly related?

T. I believe they often meet in the ſame perſon.

M. It is plain that ſome run mad with falſe religion, but many more ſeem to be mad by not having any religion at all.

T. Now we are on this ſubject, *Mary*, let me caution thee againſt the errors of thoſe *chriſtians*, who have made their religion a kind of market for churchmen to buy and ſell ſouls: who preſume to take upon themſelves to acquit or condemn them, as it turns to their own worldly advantage.

M. Whom do you mean?

T. I mean the *Papiſts*, ſometimes called *Roman Catholics*, who put a ſtrange and abſurd conſtruction upon the life and death *Errors of Papiſts.*

true holineſs, I may live ſoberly and uprightly in thy ſight, and rejoice in the contemplation of thy wiſdom and thy goodneſs, thy juſtice and thy mercy! O Almighty Father, grant this, for the ſake of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, who came into the world to enlighten the minds of men, to purge them from *idolatry*, *ſuperſtition* and *enthuſiaſm*, and to direct them into thoſe happy paths, which lead to thy eternal favour in the bleſſed manſions above.

death of our Saviour, and have invented and foiſted in a variety of follies and iniquities, which they call *chriſtian doctrines*.

M. The people of our nation, I preſume, are free from ſuch errors and abſurdities!

T. We have *papiſts* in this country, who, I believe, are not wiſer than others of the ſame perſuaſion in foreign lands; but they cannot appear openly here, nor practiſe the ſame degree of *idolatry*, in the face of the ſun. Thou art to know that the *papiſts* even pray to deceaſed mortals, and worſhip *images* made of wood and ſtone, not in the ſame degree of ignorance as the heathen world is, but ſtill they fall down before wood and ſtone. They pray to male or female *ſaints* of their own making, as *mediators* for them with God; though it is ſo often and ſo ſtrongly declared in the ſcriptures, that *Chriſt* is our *only mediator* and *interceſſor* at the throne of the Almighty. To ſuch heights do they carry their abſurdities, that I have heard my maſter ſay, he has ſeen in popiſh countries, images carried about the ſtreets, to which the people fell down upon their knees and prayed; aſcribing to them the power of working miracles, believing that if they made application to theſe ſaints, with liberal preſents, at the church or chapel dedicated to them (where their clergy have always their hands open) he or ſhe will avert evils, and give them ſucceſs. They alſo make promiſes of offerings, as if God were to be bribed by their gifts, and deeds of oſtentatious charity.

M. I am ſorry to find that mankind can be brought to ſuch dotage, and the minds of poor mortals be ſo far diverted from the worſhip of God in ſpirit and in truth. Pray, my Father, what is your opinion of the *methodiſts?*

Opinions and doctrines of methodiſts.

T. Opinion, Mary! I had rather think of what I believe myſelf, and what I practiſe, than of what other people believe and practiſe. There are many, I apprehend, of that perſuaſion, who are well-meaning and ſincere chriſtians; but I confeſs I have not the ſame good opinion of their doctrines. I diſclaim all diſputes, as foreign to my condition in life; but as all men have their opinions, I have mine; and in order that thou mayeſt not be carried by a real regard

to piety, beyond the bounds of reaſon and truth, nor conſequently inadvertently fall into the errors of the *methodiſts*, I will explain to thee the material articles, in which I underſtand they differ from us, and tell thee the reaſons why I do not agree with them.

M. I am acquainted, you know, with ſome of them, and not intirely a ſtranger to their notions; but wiſh to know your thoughts more fully concerning them.

T. Without regard to *opinion*, I hope thou wilt never forget to cheriſh ſuch benevolence of diſpoſition, ſuch moderation and charity, as will moſt improve thy underſtanding, and mend thy heart, that it may be an offering fit for heaven.

M. I believe this is the temper and ſpirit of our church, and I hope we ſupport the character in practice. But, pray, do the *methodiſt* people attend the public worſhip and frequent the *Lord's Table*, more than we uſually do at our church?

T. Yes, *Mary:* the more ſhame for us! Indeed in the apparent practiſe of piety, ſectaries generally go beyond thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion: not that I apprehend all who are conſtant, in this inſtance, are better chriſtians than many of us; any more than I believe the friars and nuns in popiſh countries, to be always better than their neighbours, merely becauſe they have ſhut themſelves up in cloyſters. On the other hand, where the heart is right, if ſome well-meaning people occaſionally go beyond the mark, it is a harmleſs fault, compared with the wilful neglect of the public worſhip of God!——With regard to the *methodiſts*, if their principles and opinions are founded on ſolid ground, and not on falſe and deluſive apprehenſions, ſo much the *better* for them. It is our part, in all caſes, to hear with candour, and determine with charity, according to our underſtanding and information; and if we do not, it will be the *worſe* for us; not becauſe we differ from *them*, but becauſe we depart from the *fundamental rule of charity*.

M. What are their notions in regard to prayer?

Suppoſed fervency of the methodiſts in prayer.

T. It is ſuppoſed that the *methodiſts* err, in raiſing their *devotion* to a degree of *enthuſiaſm*. This may be the caſe of

ſome, whoſe warmth grows from thoſe *inward feelings*, which ſuch perſons talk ſo much about. But on examining the matter in queſtion, upon thoſe noble principles of candour and charity, which ought to be the rule of our judgment, I conclude that if *one* thinks the moſt *exalted* devotion is paſſionate and warm; and *another* that prayer, in which the underſtanding unites with the heart, though leſs fervent, is moſt acceptable, and bids fair to laſt longeſt; *both* may be good people.

M. But which of the two do you approve of moſt?

T. I think that a ſettled affection of mind, and a good habit, like a moderate fair wind, promiſes to carry the veſſel to her port in more ſafety, than a guſt of paſſion, which reſembles a hard gale: for ſuppoſing the latter ſhould drive the ſhip *faſter*, it may ſhatter her *frame*, and endanger her ſinking. This is the light in which extraordinary fervor in devotion appears to me.

M. But ſhould not the worſhip of God be animated and lively?

T. Yes, otherwiſe it is defective; but ſtill it muſt be *rational* and *judicious*. Allowing for human infirmities, it ſhould be *calm* as the night, *clear* and unclouded as the day: When rational beings offer up their hearts to Him, from whom they derive their reaſon and underſtanding, they ſhould exert that power, which is their greateſt glory, and keep the mind fixed to its object. If we give ourſelves up to the *guidance* of our *paſſions*; whether in religious or worldly concerns, they will carry us headlong, to the diſgrace of human nature. I ſay, if we give ourſelves up to the *guidance* of the paſſions, for I allow that help ſhould be borrowed from them, they are undoubtedly a part of our nature: but we are to remember they are not the *ruling part*.

In one view, it is hard to conceive that *devotion* can be too warm; yet if its heat be not tempered, and its fire reſtrained, it will degenerate into frenzy.

M. I have known ſome of our neighbours talk on theſe ſubjects, till they appeared ſo elevated or depreſſed in looks, words, and geſtures, that I thought they were not right in their mind.

T. To

T. To be calm and humble, devout and reaſonable, as applicable to this caſe, ſeem to be ſo many words which ſignify the ſame thing; therefore I conclude that thy acquaintance were, for the very reaſon thou haſt mentioned, in the wrong. I remember well to have heard my maſter ſay, that "philoſophy and religion appear bright and charming in no "inſtance more than in preſerving our minds *firm* and "*ſteady.*" True devotion, therefore, when carried to its moſt exalted height, muſt be *rational* and *temperate.* The heart may burn with a *ſeraphic fire*, and give a peculiar energy to our worſhip, and yet be guarded and preſerved from all intoxication; whereas, if we give a looſe to *paſſion*, the brain will feel the ſhock. Beſides, ſuch exceſſive heat and raptures are too apt to fill us with ſpiritual pride; which, inſtead of making us ſtronger in piety, renders our devotion unacceptable to God.

M. Is this what you call *enthuſiaſm?*

T. Enthuſiaſm ſhews itſelf in various forms; but whenever the mind throws off the reſtraints of reaſon, and affects to ſoar beyond it, we may be ſure there is ſomething wrong. Man being a rational creature, muſt not depart from himſelf. He who *gave* us reaſon, ſurely meant that we ſhould *uſe* it; and nothing ſeems more natural to the human mind, nothing more juſt, right, and fit, than that we ſhould worſhip God with the *whole underſtanding*, as well as the *whole heart:* whatever is moſt agreeable to our reaſon, *that* we ſhould be attentive to, and uſe the moſt effectual means to accompliſh.

M. Do you imagine there has been much miſchief done in the world, through an exceſs of warmth in devotion?

The benefit of temperance in piety.

T. The ſame fire and zeal which have led people into violent tranſports in devotion, have been often attended with paſſions no leſs violent; and they have perſecuted thoſe who have differed from them in opinion, inſomuch that in times paſt, rivers of chriſtian blood have flowed, ſhed by the hands of chriſtians, particularly the papiſts.

M. O horrible! how is it poſſible they could think of ſerving God by deſtroying men, on account of opinion?

T. Horrible indeed! But their *worldly* intereſt was affected;

ed; and they cheated themſelves into a belief, that they were actuated by *religion*. It is not only the laws of Chriſt which requires temperance in opinion: There is a certain moderation eſſential to *virtue*, for her prerogatives cannot be maintained but by temperance of ſpirit. She is ſteady and reſolute; made for difficulties, and grows ſtronger and brighter by trial; but it is one part of her duty to keep us in mind that we are *men*, and not *angels*.

I likewiſe think, that the greater our *humility* is, the more acceptable our *worſhip* will be. A conſciouſneſs of the weakneſs of our nature, reſpecting our inability to expand the wings of our devotion beyond a certain meaſure, naturally creates ſuch a humiliation of heart, as is one of the eſſential requiſites of piety, and conſtitutes a chief part of it.

I have had ſome opportunities of obſerving amongſt the *methodiſts*, that thoſe who have been moſt apt to be tranſported, were people of the weakeſt judgment. From the ſame cauſe, being under a conſciouſneſs of guilt, ſome have fallen into the extreme of deſpair, becauſe *they* did not feel thoſe extraordinary fervors in devotion.

M. But is it really true that any conſiderable number of them fall into a ſtate of deſpair?

T. Be the number greater or leſs, it rather proves the weakneſs of the head, than the badneſs of the heart. But there is reaſon to apprehend danger in encouraging fervor beyond a certain point, which every one, upon a due conſideration and attention, may find out for himſelf. This is not an article of *faith*, but of *practice*: And for my own part, I have more *compaſſion* for thoſe who go beyond the mark, than *hopes* of ſuch as fall very ſhort of it.

M. This ſeems to be the contrary extreme of thoſe among *us*, who, during the whole ſervice at church, ſeem to be quite abſent; not ſo much from *infirmity of mind*, as a *habit* of neglect, and *an indifference to religion*.

T. In whatever rank or condition ſuch nominal devotion is practiſed, it argues infidelity, or that the offenders are as ſtupid as oxen or aſſes. How we ſhall be puniſhed for it hereafter, I know not; but I tell thee, and I beg, my dear

dear daughter, thou wilt write my words on thine heart, that I reckon this as much a ſin to be repented of, as many for which we are uſually ſorry and aſhamed, upon the leaſt thought of our being accountable to God.

I have already told thee my thoughts very fully, in relation to prayer in general, and therefore need not ſay any more: be aſſured, that much depends on it.

M. Are there no other opinions in which the methodiſts differ from us?

T. Yes: The *methodiſt*, properly diſtinguiſhed by his *faith*, or religious opinions, believes in ſuch a *ſenſible operation*, (or immediate feeling in mind or body, or both) of the Holy Ghoſt, as that a perſon may know the certain hour or minute when he was *converted*; and conſequently from being a great ſinner, may ſuddenly become a pious man, if not a great ſaint.

Methodiſts believe in the ſenſible operation of the Holy Ghoſt.

M. How is this?

T. I ſcarce know how to explain it to thee; but I ſuppoſe they would have it underſtood to be ſomewhat in the manner that St. *Paul* was converted to chriſtianity, when a voice and miraculous light came from heaven.

Now, my dear *Mary*, ſuppoſing this to be the caſe, and I know not what elſe to ſuppoſe, thou mayſt eaſily perceive this to be by no means agreeable to the common experience of mankind; who being in their right mind, hardly ever commit any great wickedneſs on a ſudden: or being already very wicked, hardly ever become ſuddenly virtuous. True religion is a work of a ſlow and gradual nature; it is learned by labour, practice, and good habits, almoſt in the ſame manner as we learn many things relating to this world. And the Almighty does not, as it were, *intrude his grace* againſt our inclination and will, but the direction is, "Seek and ye ſhall find; knock and it ſhall be opened unto you." There is no arguing with theſe people on this point; for if once they tell us, that they feel what they cannot deſcribe, of that which we do not or cannot feel, there is an end of all reaſoning upon the ſubject.

M. If I may judge by my own experience, religion is regularly

gularly progreſſive; we gain as we move forward, and I have no opinion of ſuch ſudden converſions.

T. In good truth, *Mary*, I do not believe there is any ſuch thing exiſting, except in the *imagination*, which we all know is ſometimes affected in ſo high a degree, as to tranſport or terrify exceedingly, where there is no real object of pleaſure or fear. One reaſon for my not believing it, is, that I do not conceive why, or for what reaſon it ſhould be ſo, ſeeing that the ordinary means which God in his infinite goodneſs has been pleaſed to provide for the reformation and amendment of ſinners, are very ſufficient, if we uſe them properly. Men of the greateſt eminence for wiſdom and piety, in all ages, ſince the immediate followers of Chriſt, I underſtand have been, and thoſe now living ſtill are, of this opinion; and do not pretend to ſuch ſenſible operations, or ſuch inſtantaneous converſions.

It muſt be confeſſed, that mankind generally recollect the time when they take up a *new* opinion, or alter an *old one*; and the ſame often happens with regard to our *reſolutions* and *good habits*, whether theſe relate to the amendment of our lives, or to any other concern whatſoever. But this change of opinion and habit may be eaſily accounted for: every one knows what *conviction* is, and may recollect the time when he changed his opinion: but all this is owing either to the operation of *reaſon*, or the influence of our *paſſions*; but in the caſe of *ſudden converſions*, ſuch as are pretended to by ſome of theſe people, neither the *reaſon*, the *paſſions*, nor the *will* are at all concerned: The grand buſineſs is done in a moment, by ſome unaccountable means; and the man becomes a new creature, without knowing any thing more of it, than that he feels himſelf ſo.

M. If no one was ſaved but thoſe who are *converted* in this particular manner, what is to become even of the moſt pious perſons, who never were ſenſible of any ſuch converſion?

T. Thou ſayſt well. The very queſtion ſhews the abſurdity of the thing. Therefore I humbly preſume that if we uſe the ordinary means which God hath appointed, the gracious ends of his providence will be accompliſhed; and his good-

neſs

neſs in ſuch appointment muſt ever be an object of the higheſt gratitude and praiſe, which the children of men can offer at the throne of wiſdom and mercy!

M. Is it true that any *methodiſts* aſſert that they are abſolutely certain of their ſalvation, and *cannot* forfeit it?

T. I have heard from the mouth of one of them, that *he* was *ſure* of being ſaved: and from the ſame kind of conceit they tell us, they can no longer ſin. I dare ſay the *learned* among them make refined diſtinctions; but this I ſay I heard from the mouth of one of that profeſſion.—Now to guard againſt ſuch kind of fallacies, I muſt tell thee, that this flatly contradicts what the ſcriptures declare in the moſt expreſs terms. And I make no doubt, that after *ſaying* and *believing* this doctrine, many a *mortal methodiſt* hath ſinned, and to this day continues to commit ſin. We are required to "work out our ſalvation with *fear* and *trembling:*" and is this to be done continually, even to the end of our days; or only to ſuch a period, when with great confidence in our own ſtrength, we imagine ourſelves arrived to a certain pitch of perfection in religion? Being *free*, we are ſubject to *ſin*; and if we are not watchful at *every period* of life, and under *all* circumſtances, we *ſhall* certainly ſin; and to preſume the contrary, ſeems to be in itſelf very ſinful.

Methodiſts believe in a certainty of their own ſalvation.

M. I have heard ſome of our good neighbours talk about *ſalvation* without *good works.*

T. Yes: I underſtand that the methodiſts make another nice diſtinction concerning *faith* and *good works*, by which they ſeem to ſeparate *faith* from *works*, in a ſenſe which, according to the general tenor of the ſcriptures, God never intended ſhould be made. The author and finiſher of our faith has himſelf ſaid, *Not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.* Now doſt thou imagine the *will* of God can be done, or accompliſhed, as he requires it ſhould, by thy *belief only?* The great Father of mankind, I apprehend, never intended that belief in *him*, and his *word*, whatever that word may require of us to do, ſhould be in any ſenſe *ſeparated* or *divided:* As well may we ſeparate and divide the *love of God*, from our *obedience to him*; therefore to

Methodiſts believe in being ſaved by faith, without good works.

 think,

think and to *act*, muſt go together. Faith is to be known by *practice*. "Ye ſhall know them by their fruits:" and again it is ſaid, "ſhew me your faith by your works;" and without theſe, a man cannot ſatisfy himſelf or others. Belief, without a practice correſpondent with it, is not much *credited by men*; and according to the ſcriptures, it will be *rejected by God*; for there it is expreſsly ſpoken of, as *vain*, *hypocritical*, and *impious*.

The *methodiſts* often talk of the *fooliſhneſs* of the world, triumphing over the *wiſdom* of it; and in general, and according to the ſenſe it is uſed in the ſcripture, they are in the right; but are they themſelves, in any ſenſe *wiſe*, if they do not diſtinguiſh what is ſaid of *faith in Chriſt*, as oppoſed to the *Jewiſh law*, and the ritual obſervance of the *Moſaical* inſtitution?

M. I do not clearly underſtand what you mean.

T. Let me then remind thee of what thou haſt read, namely, that many of the *Jews* who were made converts to chriſtianity, were notwithſtanding, apt to rely on the ceremonies of their former religion. Againſt this they are warned by the apoſtle, and exhorted to have *faith in Chriſt only*; and that this, ſo far as reſpects *faith*, would ſave them. Every man of common ſenſe will underſtand this, if he has a mind to exerciſe his underſtanding. Thou ſeeſt that the *ſame perſon*, could not at the ſame time entertain the faith of a *Jew*, ſo as to reſt in the law of *Moſes*; and the faith of *a Chriſtian*, ſo as to place his dependance on the *method of ſalvation* revealed in the goſpel of *Chriſt*.

M. Now I clearly comprehend the diſtinction: Is it poſſible that this ſhould lay the foundation of an opinion, that the world may be ſaved by *faith alone!*

T. However ſtrange it may ſeem, I apprehend the want of due attention to it has been the cauſe of puzzling and confounding ſo many thouſands of poor people, in relation to their believing that *they may be ſaved by faith alone*. If we fairly and impartially examine the ſacred writings, the deſign and tendency of our Saviour's doctrines and diſcourſes, and the nature of the general judgment, we ſhall find the neceſſity of good works, ſo clearly and ſo fully inſiſted on, that if

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an angel were to appear, and recommend *faith* as ſufficient to ſalvation; and ſay nothing of *good works*, honeſty, and purity of heart, we ſhould have juſt reaſon to ſuſpect he did *not* come from God.

M. Are not people, however, generally led by *example*, rather than by *doctrine*; and more influenced by thoſe diſcourſes which are expreſſed with warmth, than by ſuch as are delivered in a manner cold and lifeleſs, be they ever ſo juſt and true? And may not this be, in ſome meaſure, the occaſion of theſe errors?

T. It is a ſad truth, that thoſe opinions which fall in with the *paſſions* of mankind, generally affect them more powerfully than thoſe which are ſtrictly reaſonable; and ſome opinions pleaſe and captivate through their *novelty*.

Methodiſts differ in ſome articles of faith, and are apt to pride themſelves in the diſtinction.

The *Methodiſts* ſeem to agree with each other in certain great out-lines, which diſtinguiſh their community; yet, like other people, they divide and ſubdivide in opinion: and this will be the caſe where abſurdities are maintained. We ſhould learn from the weakneſs and fallibility of ſuch teachers, ſome of whom are very *unlearned*, to ſearch the ſcriptures ourſelves, without departing from the paths of common ſenſe and reaſon.

M. I believe there may be a comfortable hope or confidence concerning the divine favour: But how is it poſſible, without a miracle, for any one to be *ſure* of ſalvation?

T. Indeed I do not ſee how we can pretend to ſuch knowledge, without diving into the ſecrets of the Almighty, and ſinning by this very act of preſumption.——Nothing can be more dangerous than pride and preſumption in religious concerns; for they are directly contrary to the true ſpirit of chriſtianity. My maſter uſed to remark, "that for mortals to be proud of *knowledge*, is to be blind in the light; as to be proud of *virtue*, is to poiſon ourſelves with the antidote." But without entering into any nice diſtinctions concerning the doctrine, I am perſuaded that whilſt thou art doing thy beſt to improve in *faith*, thy *prayers* and *good works* will *promote* it, and *confirm* it in thine heart. If thou conſidereſt that what thou art doing, is commanded by God to be done, as moſt right, juſt, and fit, thou wilt certainly

act on the nobleſt principle, that human nature is capable of.

As to the notion of ſome *humble* minded people, who talk of the ſcanty limits of their *power* to do good works; I told thee laſt night, that thy very words of kindneſs and beneficence, proceeding from thy heart, will be accepted as a charity; and what is this but a *good work*. Every thing is a good work, where the intention goes along with the action, and the glory of God is the leading principle. The diſtinguiſhed mark of our Saviour's character, as a man, was, that *he went about doing good*.

M. Do you think that difference in opinion, upon ſuch points as theſe, occaſions our entertaining the leſs charity for each other?

T. Indeed I am afraid it does; though in reaſon it ought to produce a contrary effect; for it proves, that one ſide or both are weak and fallible creatures; and ought to compaſſionate each other. The more any one pretends to be incapable of error, the greater is the error he falls into.

Methodiſts appear to want charity towards thoſe who differ from them.

I have been ſometimes tempted to ſuſpect, what is but too common to the human mind, under certain circumſtances; that the *Methodiſts* have a wrong turn of thought, ariſing from the ſuppoſed ſuperiority which they enjoy over others; who, though confeſſedly of the chriſtian faith, are not of the ſame way of thinking with themſelves, obſerving in the tenor of their diſcourſe, the moſt cautious of them ſeem to diſcover a belief reſembling that of a *papiſt*;—that no perſon out of their church or ſect, can be ſaved.

M. It ſeems very hard to paſs ſuch a judgment on others, merely for a difference in opinion.

T. If they do really entertain ſuch notions, for I hope they do not, they certainly confine the mercies of heaven to a narrow compaſs; and are in a very uncharitable ſtate themſelves. *O my daughter*, we are *all*, at beſt, but weak and ſinful creatures: and with reſpect to each other, we *all* ſtand in need of a *faithful* friend, to point out our *frailties* and our *faults*; and by proper admonitions and corrections, excite us to a performance of our duty. This is one of the properties of *friendſhip*, and of *charity*: This is one of the advantages

vantages of living in a ſocial ſtate. Happy are thoſe who have ſuch a friend. Doſt thou think, *Mary*, thou haſt one in me?

M. O my Father, why do you diſtreſs me by the queſtion? You know I love and honour you with all my heart!

T. I only mean to tell thee, that theſe errors and infirmities to which we are thus ſubject, muſt be guarded againſt with the more care, as they are apt to deceive us with the appearance of zeal for virtue and religion; and few who are infected by them, are ſenſible of their diſeaſe.—Such defects may ſully the native purity, and ſimplicity of the heart, which would otherwiſe ſhew itſelf in gladneſs and benevolence.—Court *virtue* with an underſtanding heart, and this will give every object a pleaſing aſpect. No enthuſiaſm or melancholy, ſuperſtition or falſe notion, will get the power over thee, but all will be at peace in the little kingdom of thine own boſom, which is more to be deſired by thee, than to be the ſovereign empreſs of the whole earth.

M. Seeing what evils mankind are expoſed to, how happy am I in being born in a land where ſuch pure religion is profeſſed!

T. True: But the purer the religion we profeſs, and the more enlightened the age in which we live, the greater will our condemnation be, if we act as if no ſuch light ſhined upon us. And how many have the ſcriptures of truth before their eyes, and in their own hands, yet ſuffer themſelves to be deluded, or by falſe notions loſe their peace; while others, unawed by any conſideration of the rewards and puniſhments of a life to come, give themſelves up to wickedneſs; attending ſo little to the everlaſting duties of piety, charity, and humanity, that they are perpetually diſturbing the peace of their neighbours.

M. I am not inclined to hearken to any doctrines which are tinctured with bitterneſs and uncharitableneſs.

T. True piety can exiſt only as it is ſupported by love and charity; and any concluſion to the contrary ſeems to be unwarrantable. But whatever the opinions of others may be, my advice to thee is, to leave them to themſelves; and to hope their miſtakes, if they are miſtaken, will not be imputed

The neceſſity of piety as diſtinguiſhed from opinion.

puted to them as ſins.——Let us talk of opinions ever ſo long, it is obvious that the more we *love God*, the more anxious we ſhall be to *obey him*; and obedience is better than all other ſacrifices. God requires a reaſonable ſervice in *ſpirit* and in *truth*: The ſpiritual part is ſhewn by *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, and the *truth*, by the aſſent of *reaſon*, to what it diſcovers to be the will of God. Conſider all things with *that* freedom of thought, *that* mildneſs and generoſity of ſpirit, *that* chriſtian charity, for which it is the *glory* of man, even to die.

The propriety of going to our pariſh church.

M. Upon the whole, do you adviſe me to go always to the *pariſh church* where I ſhall happen to live?

T. Indeed I think it is much the ſafeſt, and therefore the beſt way: If the vicar, or his curate, ſhould not happen to enchant thee with the manner of his delivering the word of God, yet if thou attendeſt to what he ſays, with all thy heart, and with prayers to God for bleſſings on it, I would venture a thouſand to one but thou wilt become a *good chriſtian*. And if thou doſt not conſult thine own heart, and apply diligently to thy duty, it will ſignify but little to what place of devotion thou goeſt. Thy ſalvation depends on thine own piety, and the mercy of God, through Chriſt; and not on the fancy or opinion of man. The conſtancy of thy mind, and the way of worſhip in which thou haſt been bred, will probably ſecure thee againſt vain opinions; and through the aſſiſtance of divine grace, preſerve thee in ſuch knowledge of religion, as the Almighty will accept.

M. Do you think the church of *England*, as it is eſtabliſhed in this country, is the beſt and trueſt?

T. I think indeed it is the *beſt*, becauſe I believe it to be the *trueſt*. We have in this country *ſectaries* without number: ſome of their religious plans and ſyſtems ſeem to be reaſonable, and ſome abſurd. As to thoſe who are commonly called *Diſſenters*, they differ chiefly in form; they will not kneel when we do, and they allow of nothing under the name of a *biſhop*. This is *their* notion. They have one rule among them, which is better than ours—they think it abſurd, that any miniſter of the goſpel ſhould be rich, and are aſhamed that any ſhould be very poor.

M. But

M. But what do you think of the *church of England?*

T. As to diſtinction of churches, it is natural to eſteem that moſt, in which we firſt drew our breath: but I can tell thee, *Mary*, according to the beſt of my judgment, there is in the *proteſtantiſm* of the *church of England*, as we ſee it practiſed by ſober-minded chriſtians, ſomething more humble, more pure, more charitable, and enlarged, than in any mode of faith or worſhip that I know of. Whatever other churches may teach, the property of ours is to ſuffer bravely; and to ſhew a liberal chriſtian-like indulgence to all other perſuaſions. Whilſt it entreats, it uſes no violence: it hath conſtantly in view the conduct of the *great founder*, in the genuine faith and practice delivered down by him, as a law to all his followers, through all ages. Thou remembereſt, that when the diſciples of our Lord were offended at the inſult he met with in *Samaria*, they recommended to him, to command *fire from heaven* to chaſtiſe the offenders: but he told them they did not underſtand what ſpirit themſelves were of; and much leſs were they aware of the divine charity of their maſter, who came to ſave all mankind, and not to deſtroy any one. The *church of England* never perſecuted: It is not in the leaſt tinctured with enthuſiaſm or pageantry. It earneſtly recommends conſtancy of mind, and equality of conduct; zeal for the honour of God, and religious fear, not to offend him. It teaches purity of faith and manners, without the leaſt ſemblance of hypocriſy, or worldly-mindedneſs. It is ſimple and eaſy to be underſtood, and the more, as it lays its chief ſtreſs on viſiting the *fatherleſs* and the *widow*; and keeping its votaries unſpotted from the world. Thou mayſt live to ſee it gain ground, which it will do, in proportion as mankind recover from a ſtate of barbarity, and the blindneſs of popiſh ſuperſtition.

M. What do you think of the ſermons of our divines?

T. They contain the moſt *rational* ſyſtem of the *pureſt* and moſt *angelic* divinity, founded on the true ſpirit and general tenor of the goſpel. In a word, they teach a religion fit for a really virtuous and underſtanding perſon, profeſſing a belief in Chriſt, as the Redeemer of the world. It is an amazing

amazing conſideration that they are not more attended to. We ought ever to pray for their ſucceſs *(a)*.

M. So I will, my Father; and whatever opinions ſome of my friends and acquaintance may entertain, if I leave them in quiet, the leaſt they can do is to obſerve the ſame rule of conduct towards me. I know myſelf to be but duſt and aſhes! Shall I preſume to decide upon the fate of others!

T. I hope not; but let it not affect the compaſſion of thy mind, if others ſhould preſumptuouſly ſet in judgment upon thee. Adore thy Maker for his boundleſs goodneſs to *all* the children of men, whatever their ſituation may be. If thou haſt a deep ſenſe of ſuch goodneſs, it will naturally inſpire thy mind with the *tendereſt charity*, and the *trueſt benevolence* towards thy fellow-creatures. This again will render thee ſo much the more acceptable to him, who is the God of all mercy, and the tender Father of all mankind; and who, in his own good time, will moſt aſſuredly adjuſt all thoſe differences, which men ſo *often* and ſo *vainly* attempt to regulate.

(a) For the Succeſs of the Clergy.

O Eternal God, almighty Father, who before the coming of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt in the fleſh, didſt ſend a meſſenger to prepare his way, grant that the miniſters and preachers of his goſpel may enjoy perpetual peace and ſafety; and by the ſoberneſs of their lives, their unwearied diligence and zeal in thy ſervice, awaken my attention to their inſtruction, and ſo prepare and make me ready for his ſecond coming to judge the world, that I may be acceptable in thy ſight, and receive a bleſſed reward at his hands, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever! *Amen.*

THURSDAY.

CONVERSATION VII.

M. THE good advice which you gave me laſt night, my Father, has determined me never to *quarrel* with any one, on account of their opinion; and to ſhew no reſentment for any difference in ſentiment, unleſs it has a manifeſt tendency to diſturb the common peace.

The neceſſity of moderation in opinion.

T. The moſt part of the differences which create much vexation in the world, prove that one ſide, or both, are very fooliſh or perverſe, ſhort-ſighted or preſumptuous. The fooiliſh often contend for things which are by no means *material:* the perverſe make no allowance for human infirmities: the ſhort-ſighted draw their concluſions, and condemn or acquit, without comprehending; and the preſumptuous aſcribe to themſelves infallibility. In every caſe the miſchief which would reſult from the difference in opinion, ſuppoſing both ſides to be fair and candid, is oftentimes trifling, when the diſpute itſelf becomes dangerous to the peace of the community. The buſy often meddle in matters which do not belong to them: they are apt to invade each others province, and to argue away the ſubſtance of things: Sometimes they diſpute on points, of which they are by no means competent judges: at others, they do not even diſtinguiſh whether the object belongs to them as mortals. I ſuppoſe that every ſect has its mixture or portion of *truth*, as well as of *error*; and ſurely the offices of humanity and charity are due to all. If I differ from my neighbour, in any *religious* opinion, which is of importance, I have no right to cenſure and reproach him, but ſhould endeavour to convince him by fair and friendly reaſoning: But if he is obſtinate in his error, and all I can ſay will be of no ſervice to him or myſelf, *what ſignifies talking?*

" *Self-*

" *Self-conceit, Mary,* is the ordinary attendant of *ignorance,* " as the being covetous of applauſe uſually diſcovers a ſlen- " der merit." Whatever the world may fondly imagine, thou wilt eaſily comprehend that whatever is beſt calculated to anſwer the great end of the Almighty, in giving us a Being, muſt be the beſt. " The higheſt knowledge is " to know *ourſelves*; and the end of ſuch knowledge is to " know *God.*" Let us, as far as we are able, learn to be at *peace* in our mortal ſtate.

M. This is agreeable to a wiſe remark, which, when I read it, made a great impreſſion on me; that " rectitude of " will, is a greater ornament and perfection, than bright- " neſs of underſtanding: and to be divinely good, more " valuable than any other wiſdom or knowledge."

T. The fixing on thy memory ſuch excellent remarks, will not only enlarge thy underſtanding, and improve thy judgment, but will alſo ſtrengthen thy mind againſt difficulties and temptations.

I told thee, in ſome of our former converſations, that *courage* is neceſſary in maintaining the cauſe of *religion*; but when we make a ſtand in defence of it, we ſhould conſider what *can be done*, as well as what we *wiſh to do*; uſing no other weapons, than thoſe which *charity* and *benevolence* provide: and it is neceſſary to manage theſe with addreſs, otherwiſe the more zeal we ſhew, be it ever ſo *true*, the more hazard we run of being eſteemed *bigots*, and of diminiſhing the influence of our good example with reſpect to others. I adviſe thee to treat all fooliſh and unjuſt reproach, or uncivil behaviour, with indifference: there are numerous accidents in life that plunge the weak part of mankind into great uneaſineſs or diſtreſs of mind, which the philoſopher and the wiſe chriſtian laughs at: Yet as occaſions offer, defend thyſelf by explaining thy opinion, and recommending peace and good-will. Contradiction expreſſed in groſs terms inflames the *paſſions*, and paſſionate diſputes hardly ever brighten the underſtanding, though they often extinguiſh the light of reaſon.

The weakneſs of mankind is in no inſtance ſo fully diſplayed, as in expecting *perfection* in every one but themſelves.

If men enquire, with an honeſt well-diſpoſed mind, and act according to their conſciences, they ought to be eſteemed by others on that very account, whatever their opinions may be: but when, inſtead of ſearching for *truth*, they contrive how to worry and diſtreſs their opponents, they loſe our favour, and betray their own cauſe; for we may generally pronounce thoſe to be moſt in the wrong, who are moſt averſe to *peace*. We differ in opinion as in countenance: but it often happens, that both the contending parties are blinded by prejudices; and though they are ſo cloſely joined in diſpute, yet "like people tied back to back, they cannot "ſee each other."

M. If I ever ſhould unluckily fall into a diſpute of this kind, what rule do you recommend to me?

T. Uſe "*ſoft* words, and *hard* arguments; and ſtrive not to *vex*, but to *convince* thy opponents."

M. But will not *hard* arguments, as you call them, *hurt*, as well as *vex* the perſon contended with?

T. If they do, thou mayſt be aſſured he does not contend for *truth*, but ſomething elſe.——Thou art to conſider, that in regard to the ſtate of religion, in this our dear country, the goſpel is ſpread open before us, and we are invited to judge for ourſelves: our *religious*, as well as *civil* liberties, are carried to ſo high a point, that ſome of the beſt of us are occaſionally intoxicated with notions peculiar to ourſelves. *Our character, as a nation*, is very ſingular: for with all our virtues and advantages, we are divided and ſubdivided, perhaps more than any people on the face of the earth: We are preſerved amidſt ſuch a variety by agreeing in one great principle, namely, that no one ſhall preſume to hurt another, merely on account of any difference in opinion: it being a privilege equal to all, that whoever diſturbs the peace of the community, ſhall be treated as a common enemy. It is alſo our happineſs to live under a *kingly power*, regulated by laws, and therefore we cannot be diſtracted by a thouſand rulers: Our preſent ſovereign is a good man, and a true friend to his people; and our government the mildeſt upon the earth: if our *morals* and *manners*

kept pace with the excellence and glory of it, we ſhould be happy indeed!

M. But in the mean time, we do not ſeem to apprehend religion to be in danger from a difference of opinion; but allow all perſons to worſhip God each in his own way.

T. True, my daughter; yet be not ſurprized when thou heareſt the *gay* world reproach the *ſerious*, be their *faith* and *practice* ever ſo pure. Didſt thou remark the other day how that giddy girl, *Martha*, laughed at good old *Peter?* Such behaviour is eaſily accounted for, when it is conſidered, that the moſt *ignorant* are the moſt *conceited*; for being unable to diſcern their own folly, they cannot find out the wiſdom of others.

M. Who are to give *precepts*, or ſhow *examples*, but thoſe who are ſeriouſly minded, and conſider the true ends of life?

T. The *opinions* of men, being as different as their perſons, the greateſt virtues, or the moſt prudent conduct will not eſcape cenſure: and the raſh manner of pronouncing ſentence upon others, often hurries men into ſuch a labyrinth of uncharitable blindneſs, that they become incapable of diſtinguiſhing *truth* from *falſehood*, or *right* from *wrong*. I therefore repeat my charge to thee, not to expect that even a harmleſs and inoffenſive life will *always* ſecure thee from calumny and reproach: but remember, that an *underſtanding heart* may draw improvement even from *calumny*, and conſequently turn ſuch evils to advantage.

M. It is a misfortune indeed to ſuffer for our *virtue!*

T. It is a greater to deſerve to ſuffer for our *vice*; and how much ſoever it is to be lamented that *virtue* ſhould ever ſuffer, it is not to be wonder'd at; becauſe men are generally deficient either in *judgment* or in *charity*; and moſt of us have a greater propenſity to detect and condemn *ſmall faults*, than to ſee and applaud *great virtues*. Theſe conſiderations, *Mary*, ſhould teach us how to judge of mankind, and how to preſerve the equality, the integrity, and the goodneſs of our own minds, by tracing the errors of others to their proper ſource. I have warned thee more than once, that if it ſhould fall to thy lot to be reproached for thy piety, to bear

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it patiently; and rather to think it the misfortune of others to judge ill, than thy own, to be ill judged of. Evils will come; it is hardly possible for any child of Adam to be exempted from them: and knowing this, it is our interest and our wisdom, to prepare for them.

M. The sense of religion is, I hope, so well grounded in my heart, that I shall despise all such reproaches, and regularly discharge my duty, notwithstanding such *discouragements.*

T. Do not call them discouragements! If they exercise thy virtue, they are so far useful to virtue. If mankind live more according to fashion and opinion, which are very changeable, than according to the rules of wisdom, which are uniform and lasting, it is weak to expect that they will not judge of others, as they live themselves. I grant it would be a more becoming and a more profitable task, if, instead of condemning or complaining of their neighbours, they looked strictly into their own hearts, and first reformed themselves; but we must take things as they are. Thou wilt be surprized, *Mary*, to hear that there are some people *weak* and *wicked* enough, to prefer the character of *knaves* to that of *fools:* They fear more to be without *cunning* than without *guile*; while others, afraid of over much righteousness, desire to be esteemed *people of the world*, rather than *pious* persons.

M. From whence does this unhappy temper and mistaken judgment of things arise?

T. From the prevalence of *evil passions:* but in general, I believe the contempt of our neighbour arises from the *pride* of our own hearts, and the fond conceit of our own superiority. I have often attended to the discourse at my master's table: regardless of sects and parties, he made it his study to live upon good terms with all *honest men:* I have there many times observed, both in *religious* and *political* concerns, that what men have said for *themselves*, and what their *adversaries* imagine them to have said, are generally two very different things: and those who will not be at the pains to consider distinctly the arguments on both sides, but will judge of either, by the character or representation given

Reflections on false judging.

of

of it by the oppoſite party, will be for ever led into erroneous judgments concerning men and things, and continue unavoidably ignorant of the true ſtate of the matter in queſtion.

M. You would infer from hence, that we ought to be very cautious in forming our judgment, and giving our opinion upon things that come before us!

T. Experience has taught me ſo much, that I am always ſlow of believing vulgar report. And thou wilt ſoon find that the more irreligious and immoral a people grow, the more they will be given to lying and defamation; and to condemn each other for opinion. Beſides, we find ſuch a variety of ſentiments and doctrines, that one would be tempted to think that mankind hunted more after *novelty* than *truth*. In general our nation is fond of liberty, and it is with reluctance we ſubmit to any controul.

Religious liberty, in what it conſiſts.

M. Is not this the caſe with all mankind? But pray what is *liberty*, as applicable to *religion* and *morality*?

T. Such liberty conſiſts in the power of over-ruling our appetites, and acting according to the dictates of our reaſon: it is the power of executing what the underſtanding, when unprejudiced, judges to be fit and reaſonable.

M. Our neighbour *Sampſon*, ſome ſay, is a great libertine, yet I hear he pretends to be as *free* as the air.

T. It is well if he knows his own meaning: he cannot *be* free to break the commandments, though perhaps *he makes free* to break them. Alas! my daughter, thoſe fooliſh people who think of excuſing their wickedneſs with the pretence that *ſin*, as generally underſtood by chriſtians, is natural, overlook the more noble and excellent part of our nature, which is, that we are *rational*, and free to do *good* or *evil*. I know not what *Sampſon*, or any ſuch men, who preſume on the ſtrength of their bodies or minds, may pretend to; but of this I am thoroughly convinced, that then only are we *free*, when our reaſon is unawed by any falſe fears, and unbribed by any fooliſh hopes; not hurried away by luſt or paſſions, nor cheated by the *falſe appearances* of *good*. This is the liberty of a rational creature and a chriſtian!

M. You ſeem *animated* by your love for that *rational liberty*,

berty, which is ſo much the *glory* of our nature!——Pray proceed—

T. The independent ſtate of mind which I have been ſpeaking of, is the ſtrongeſt indication of true greatneſs of ſoul, whether it be in the *prince* or the *peaſant:* it leads to every thing which is amiable and praiſe-worthy, and neceſſarily produces inward tranquility and peace.—If thou aſkeſt how is this ſtate of mind to be acquired, I anſwer: Whatever will enable thee to break the chains of unruly paſſions, and deliver thyſelf from the tyranny of thy appetites; whatever thou doeſt towards reſiſting thoſe ſevere maſters, who, while they promiſe freedom, bring us into the moſt wretched *ſlavery*, is the object thou ſhouldſt keep in view. In ſhort, the only ſpring from which *perfect liberty* can flow is *religion*. The *law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, will make us free from the law of ſin* (a). If then thou wouldſt be *free* in the moſt glorious ſenſe; if thou wouldſt be happy for ever, ally thyſelf to *virtue*; court her as the object of thy love; *look into the perfect law of liberty* (b); cheriſh a lively and vigorous ſenſe of the *chriſtian* doctrines in thy heart, and pray for conſtancy of mind and ſteadineſs of affection towards God (c).

M. I per-

(a) Rom. viii. 2. (b) James i. 25.

(c) For Conſtancy of Mind, and Divine Aſſiſtance.

Hear me, O merciful God and tender Father, and let thy grace be ever preſent with thy weak unworthy ſervant. I am not able of myſelf to do, or think any thing that is good; O let thy ſpirit aſſiſt my poor endeavours. Regulate my *affections* and *deſires*, and confine them to ſuch objects as are pleaſing in thy ſight. Vanquiſh the temptations which beſet me! Fix my inconſtant mind, and follow me through all my paths. Thou, Lord, art my *hope!*——thou art my *reſt!*——in thee alone is freedom from the chains of ſin! in thee alone is *pleaſure* and *true ſatisfaction*; and *all without thee* is miſery and torment. O grant me the happy ſecurity of thy *peace*, that I may abandon all the falſe appearances of happineſs here below, and find ſoft eaſe and ſweet repoſe in thy love and favour. Hear my prayer, O merciful Lord; O hear me and have mercy on me, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt my Redeemer. *Amen.*

M. I perceive, with great ſatisfaction, what true *liberty* is, and what is meant by *warring againſt nature.* It is very plain, that thoſe who have the power of acting *reaſonably*, have the power alſo of acting *unreaſonably*: and though we are by nature prone to *evil*, we are by nature alſo inclined to *good*: at leaſt I feel a *pleaſure* in doing *good*, which ſeems to ariſe as naturally in my mind, as *pain* and remorſe after having done *evil.*

T. I am glad to hear thee ſay this: What could all the *Sampſons* in chriſtendom ſay againſt it? I am exceeding glad to find thou haſt underſtanding enough to perceive the *fair* ſide of the queſtion, and virtue enough to judge with candour. This, I fear, is more than ſome of our *betters* do; at leaſt I have heard people talk very ingeniouſly in finding *fault* with every thing but themſelves, in whom the chief fault lay: I ſay fault, becauſe I was ſure they could have acted differently if they had pleaſed. It is *reaſon*, *Mary*, which muſt guide us right, or call it *religion* if you pleaſe. Religion to us reaſonable creatures, appears to be only reaſon exalted, and informed by the word of God: and happy are we, when we act ſo *reaſonably* as to liſten to its dictates, and obey them as the means of *perfect freedom.* *Reaſon*, rightly informed, is *true wiſdom*, and leads to perfection and happineſs.

Thou knoweſt that the *ſinner* and the *fool* are always repreſented in ſcripture, as terms of the ſame ſignification. And the ſpirit of God declares to us mortals, *unto man he ſaith, the fear of the Lord, That is wiſdom; and to depart from evil, is underſtanding.*—And what is required of us, but to act *juſtly*, to ſhew *mercy*, and to walk *humbly* with God?—It is evident beyond diſpute, that a mind virtuouſly diſpoſed, finds in itſelf a native agreeableneſs to the principles of true religion, in the ſame manner as the body which is healthy, is fit and ſuited to the purpoſes of life.

M. I remember, that the wiſe ſon of Sirach, ſays, *he that keepeth the law of the Lord, getteth the underſtanding thereof.*

T. We may add, the underſtanding of every thing elſe, which is proper and neceſſary to our well-being.

M. But the *abuſe* of the liberty you have explained to me,

me, is what I ſuppoſe hurries men into a *courſe of ſinning*, and cuſtom is a *ſecond* nature.

T. Being as we are, *inclined* to *good*, yet *prone* to *evil*, either virtue or vice may become a cuſtom, or as it is proverbially called, *a ſecond nature*. Where there is a vicious inclination, or a love of wickedneſs, the mind is blinded: and the heart which takes no pleaſure in righteouſneſs, cannot be ſuppoſed to ſeek for the *grace of God*, or be fit to receive it, on whatever terms it can be offered. Hence men go on from one degree of wickedneſs to another, till their heart is *entirely corrupted*, and averſe to all good; and thus *vice* becomes rooted in us, and grows up to maturity. This fully explains the proverb, that *cuſtom is a ſecond nature*: we ſhould therefore keep a watchful eye on our evil propenſities, and encourage the true ſimplicity of the heart, which leads us to worſhip and to obey God: and for this thou ſhouldſt pray *(a)*. Our Saviour mentions the *ſimplicity of little children*, as an excellent preparative for religion; and it is eaſy to underſtand, that where the leaſt guile or deceit prevails, religion will ſhew itſelf moſt, in its native purity: There can be nothing of *pride*, *art*, or *cunning* in true religion.

M. I have often heard the ſober part of my acquaintance talk of *warring againſt nature*: what do they mean?

T. If our paſſions rebel, we muſt declare war againſt them, and try to reduce them to obedience to the laws of God, and the dictates of our own conſcience. In doing this we may be ſenſible of ſome ſmart, but it is only ſuch as we feel upon the dreſſing a wound. We are ſo formed by nature, that

Grace, as oppoſed to our evil propenſities.

(a) For Freedom from dangerous Habits.

Almighty Lord of mercy, who knoweſt the heart of man! look down from thy glory, and behold me proſtrate before thee. Preſerve me, O Father, from *folly* and blindneſs of heart: Let not my eyes dwell on vanity, nor my ſpirit be tainted by pride, or any uncharitable thought. Defend me, O God, from uncleanneſs and all other deadly ſins, which war againſt the ſoul; nor let the deceits of the world turn my heart from heaven: But in thy good time receive me, O merciful Father, into thy manſions of eternal bliſs, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, my only Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

that religion only can cure the ſoul of its ſickneſs and wounds: And as it is natural to ſeek a remedy of our diſeaſes, religion becomes as neceſſary to the *ſoul*, as *food* to the *body*. Though we uſe the word *natural*, as applicable to ſome evil inclinations; yet it is very evident, that all evil inclinations tend to our ruin; and that *ſelf-indulgence* often proves *ſelf-deſtruction*.

M. I know, from the word of God, that there is no temptation which we have not the power to reſiſt; and I ſuppoſe there is no temptation whatſoever, which has not been overcome by different people. That which has been done, may be done again: God is the merciful Father of us all; and if I pray to him, I truſt he will defend me from *myſelf*, as well as from others, and aſſiſt me to overcome all temptations both inward and outward.

T. Thou art certainly in the right: therefore exert the power which God hath given thee; and I beſeech thee, pray conſtantly and fervently to him *(a)*. Thy only ſecure defence is in the grace of God, which will be given to thoſe who *ſincerely* aſk it. What but this can promiſe any good, or make good any promiſe of happineſs? The *wiſe* are ready to give the world all its pleaſures and its riches for the favour of God; though the *fool* will ſtill be a fool, in oppoſition to the brighteſt light of *truth*, and the moſt gracious invitations to *mercy*. Thoſe only can judge of this favour who are ſteady in a virtuous life; and take delight in offering up their prayers to heaven, refreſhing themſelves continually at the fountain of life and happineſs. The wicked, ſometimes, plunge ſo deep in iniquity, that to them, *virtue*, like *colours* to the blind, is but a *name*. But let us be ever

(a) For good Habits.

Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, to whoſe command all things are obedient, I beſeech thee to rule my affections, and bring all my deſires into a regular ſubjection to thy will. Strengthen me by thy might, O God, againſt all temptations, and particularly thoſe which moſt eaſily aſſault me; that by a habit of governing my *paſſions*, and reſtraining my *appetites* within due bounds, I may run freely and chearfully the way of thy commandments, and preſent my body and ſoul a lively, holy, and acceptable ſacrifice unto thee, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

ever ſo much involved in darkneſs by ignorance or perverſeneſs, we cannot, with juſtice, charge this to the account of *nature*: nor complain that we have ſuch propenſities to evil, as cannot be withſtood; ſince the very foundation of offering ſo high a reward to *virtue*, ſuppoſes us at liberty to reſiſt evil, and to do good.

M. Nothing can be plainer than this.

T. God never made our *duty* contrary to our *reaſon* nor our *nature*, whatever thoſe may imagine, who, by firſt neglecting that duty, darken their *reaſon*, and then lay the blame on *nature*. By whatever *name* we call our *bad* inclinations, it is our *duty* to *oppoſe* them; and the taſk becomes eaſier and eaſier, the more we are accuſtomed to it. We are alſo aſſured that the power of conquering will be given us, if we ſeek ſuch power with a ſincere heart: and it is no leſs evident that *we muſt conquer or periſh*. If we *die* in the conteſt, as many have done, ſtill we are *conquerors*.

M. In every light I ſee the neceſſity of being on my guard, againſt the envenomed teeth of *vice!* and conclude, that the greater diſtance I am from her, the nearer I ſhall be to *virtue*, and the more delighted with her friendſhip. But I have heard ſome people talk as if, in order to take care of the *ſoul*, it is neceſſary to neglect the *body*.

False notions concerning the duty of adhering to religion, to the neglect of the neceſſary concerns of life.

T. I need not repeat the various abſurdities which mankind fall into. In *popiſh* countries, numbers of both ſexes under this notion, retire to convents and nunneries, and violate the ſacred obligations of *charity*, by living on the ſpoils of the poor: whereas true religion is ſo far from ſuppoſing that we have no *bodies* to provide for, that there is hardly a leſſon in it, which does not teach ſomething that regards the good of the body. We are commanded to love our neighbour as ourſelves; by which it is clear that we are to love ourſelves: we are compounded of *body* and *ſoul*, and therefore muſt have regard to both. The wants of the body call loudly on the ſoul; and the goodneſs of heaven is equally conſpicuous in the care of both. What are all the arts and devices of human life; the building of houſes to cover us from the inclemency of the ſkies; the ſowing our fields with grain of many kinds, and gathering into barns:

the various manufactures of human invention, for covering our bodies? From whence ariſe thoſe numerous endearing ſocial ties, which bind us to each other? What is the care of our own *children*, or our *parents*, and in general of our *families*: thoſe who do not provide for their own kindred, are ſaid to be worſe than *heathens*? What is the exerciſe of *chriſtian charity*, as this relates to the body, "I was hungry "and ye gave me food: I was naked and ye clothed me: I "I was ſick and ye viſited me: I was a ſtranger and ye took "me in?" Theſe acts of mercy, the great Friend and Saviour of the world informs us, are *works* which he will regard as done to himſelf, if we do them to others who are in need. Though all theſe deeds muſt flow from a good *ſpirit*, they ſurely relate to the *body*.

Behold the glories of God, diſplayed in the brightneſs of the ſun, the cooling breezes, and the ſhowers which drop fatneſs from the heavens! Theſe delight the heart of man, but they are neceſſary to nouriſh the earth, and furniſh food and raiment; without which, we could not *live* to ſing the praiſes of the Almighty Benefactor. What is *life* itſelf with reſpect to our preſent ſtate, but as we preſerve the *body*? The great fault of mankind is, that they often pamper the body and ſtarve the ſoul; or devoting themſelves to the pleaſures of fancy, neglect their duty to God. From hence viſionary people have fallen into the miſtaken notion of retiring from the world.

M. I apprehend that thoſe who talk of retirement are afraid to ſtand their ground; or perhaps do not clearly underſtand their own meaning. It is very obvious that the *ſoul* is intereſted in taking a due and proper care of the body, and that it is injured when the health of it is deſtroyed or impaired.

T. The great taſk of life, as I have fully explained to thee, is to diſtinguiſh the *body* from the *ſpirit*, and to preſerve it under the government of the ſoul, as its proper guardian and friend. But great auſterities, which give pain, or weaken the body, are founded on an abſurd ſuppoſition, that vice lieth but ſkin deep; or that becauſe the body is to be kept under, and made ſubſervient to the great ends

of

of heaven, in giving us breath, and aſſiſting the ſpirit in its preparation for another life, therefore we muſt think of the happineſs of another life *only*. We may indeed conclude they are ſo far in the right, that this "is the one "thing needful," but it is but one; and we muſt not defeat our own end, by a fooliſh contempt of thoſe duties to mankind, by means of which we are *required* to ſeek for heaven's joys. We are to poſſeſs our veſſel in *meekneſs* and *patience*, but never grow indifferent to the happineſs of human-kind. Thou ſeeſt the never-ceaſing care of heaven over all its creatures! How can we imitate God by being inactive; or how promote the happineſs of our fellow-creatures but by living in the world, and ſhewing a juſt regard to *ſocial obligations*, as a part of *religious duties?*

Neceſſity of an active life.

As to an inactive life, it may be obſerved, that a great part of mankind are inclined to indolence, and would avoid labour, if *neceſſity* did not urge them to it. If other people would work for them, they would not work for themſelves: but the truly religious are generally truly induſtrious; and for the ſame reaſon that virtue itſelf conſiſts in *doing good*, they know that no good can be done by a lazy or inactive life, whether it regards this world, or the world to come. Thoſe who affect to ſoar above the condition of human nature, and are wrapped up in their own contemplations, to the neglect and prejudice of their fellow-creatures, do not know what belongs to them: Man muſt act according to his nature: Angels are *ſpirits*, and require no meat nor drink; *man*, in his preſent ſtate, cannot ſubſiſt without both; and though we are commanded to labour for the bread which endureth to everlaſting life, yet we are alſo commanded to labour in our ſeveral callings, for the bread which is to ſupport our periſhing bodies. Every motive conſpires to render us *active* and *induſtrious* in our callings, as *men* and as *chriſtians*; as ſubjects, parents, children, and in all other relations of life.

M. The ſobriety recommended by religion, naturally promotes *induſtry:* I apprehend the difficulty lies in exerciſing our bodies in *temperance*, and in *ſpiritualizing* our thoughts.

T. Upon the whole, we may have many reaſons for withdrawing

drawing from the gay ſcenes of life; but few to ſequeſter ourſelves from the world, while we continue in a right mind.

M. I am thoroughly convinced, for my own part, that if I were aged and rich, I ſhould remain in the world: Yet our good neighbour *Frances* diſcourſed the other day, as if ſhe meant to ſhut herſelf up in her cloſet, and ſpend the remainder of her life alone in piety.

False notions of retirement.

T. Frances is a good woman, therefore anxious for the ſecurity of her ſoul, and thinks ſhe can provide for it moſt effectually when ſhe can ſee nobody, and nobody can ſee her. But thou mayſt aſk her, if this will not be putting her candle under a buſhel, and extinguiſhing her light, inſtead of letting it ſhine forth for the honour of God? Religion is a ſtate of action, not of reſt: our Saviour and his followers were conſtantly *employed* in the world, and in the face of the ſun, except when they retired to pray. If all good people, no older than *Frances*, were to retire, of what uſe would their experience be? How would their fortitude and piety, acquired by time, be expreſſed for the benefit of ſociety? If all ſuch people left the field, who would ſtand in the gap, or ſtem the torrent of iniquity, with which the world ſeems threatned to be overwhelmed? If ſhe hungers and thirſts after righteouſneſs, ſhe ſhould be eager to take care of the ſouls of others; which cannot be done entirely in her cloſet. I think ſhe does well to retreat, ſo far as relates to the buſtling money-getting part of life. To be anxious for that which ſhe does not want, would be as abſurd as not to be anxious for what ſhe does. She deſires to make the moſt grateful offering to heaven, let her conſult how ſhe may beſt act, to become the inſtrument of heaven, in promoting the happineſs of thoſe, for whom heaven itſelf is moſt deeply intereſted. Many have choſen retirement, in hopes of flying from themſelves, but were not able to ſupport ſuch a ſituation with any dignity or advantage. A ſudden tranſition from an active, to an indolent or a contemplative life, is hardly practicable to the generality of mankind.

M. Your advice is according to my way of thinking, and I ſhall take the firſt opportunity of letting her know your thoughts;

thoughts; but pray, my Father, is it not the cuſtom in ſome countries, for people in an advanced age to retire from the world?

T. I have juſt mentioned *convents* and *nunneries* in *popiſh* countries, to which I am told people of all ages, from various motives, coop themſelves up: but this cuſtom is a child of enthuſiaſm and pride, rather than of ſober reaſon and pious humility: for many young men go into convents, and young women to nunneries, merely becauſe they are not rich enough to live in ſplendour in the world, and have too much pride to apply themſelves to uſeful employments. Thus, in manifeſt violation of the eternal obligation to charity, they feed, as I have told thee, on the ſpoils of the laborious, by the incomes they receive from the lands; and think they do God ſervice, if they give the fragments of their meat to the miſerable who come to their gates.

M. I perceive how eaſily mankind are betrayed into falſe notions of religion; and how one part of the world may impoſe on the other, when either the rich or the poor go out of the track in which Divine Providence hath placed them. I am alſo ſatisfied, my Father, that we are all born to live in a ſocial ſtate; but though *our neighbour* may be miſtaken in this point, yet ſhe ſeems ſtrongly fortified againſt evil in every ſtation, and has a number of texts ſtored up in her memory, ſuited to all the occurrences of life. I have avoided the quoting paſſages of this kind, being afraid of making too free with the ſcriptures and ſcripture language.

Guard againſt miſconſtruction of ſcripture.

T. Thou judgeſt well, *Mary:* it is a common fault to quote improperly, and uſe the words of the ſacred writings, without due attention to the ſenſe and deſign of the writer. However ready we ſhould be in applying the *rules*, and remembring the *precepts* contained in them, we ſhould uſe them with caution and reverence. And now, *Mary*, I will tell thee of one great *fault*, I might call it a great *ſin*, for it ſeems to be a breach of one of the commandments; yet it is often committed by *ſober* people: I mean the careleſs manner of mentioning our great Creator. If I have already ſpoken of it to thee, let me *repeat* my deſire, that thou wouldſt never utter the name of the Almighty, without *ſome*

Awful mention of God.

pauſe

pauſe for recollection, and as a mark of reverential awe. This will keep alive in thy mind a due ſenſe of the divine Majeſty.

M. I am ſenſible this is a duty, and will endeavour to obſerve it. But can you, my Father, inform me *why* the ſcriptures aſcribe *paſſions* and *bodily organs* to our great Creator, and ſpeak of his anger and vengeance, his hands, his eyes, and throne and ſuch like?

T. In moſt inſtances which concern *God* and the *ſoul*, we are not able to carry our *thoughts* high enough, nor have *words* to expreſs them, but as we borrow them from *ſenſe*, and adapt them to our capacities. Eyes denote ſight, and he ſeeth all things: hands expreſs power, and he is omnipotent: anger means a juſt ſenſe of affronts; and vengeance, puniſhment: thrones imply ſovereign authority, and ſuch like. At the ſame time, we know that *God* is a *ſpirit*, not viſible to mortal eyes, infinite in purity and devoid of paſſion: incomprehenſible, for who can comprehend how God ſees and knoweth all things! No tongue can deſcribe *his* glory: no thought can compaſs *his* perfection!

The advantages of humility.

M. I believe, my Father, that moſt of the faults we fall into in regard to *religion*, ariſe from the pride of our hearts. There are many who ſay they are *humble*, and perhaps think themſelves ſo, who yet frequently betray a very contrary temper and diſpoſition.

T. In common life, *humility* is eſteemed one of the moſt excellent of moral virtues. It makes *us* love our fellow-creatures, and it attracts *their* affection, while it excites no malice or envy. It has one peculiar advantage, adapted to all circumſtances; for it ſets us *above* the world in the trueſt and beſt ſenſe: for "he that is little in his own eyes, will "not be troubled to be thought ſo by others." The conſequence of which is, freedom from temptations to pride, envy, anger, and ambition, and all other turbulent paſſions, which are ſo apt to diſturb the human breaſt. Thus, what is moſt pleaſing to God, is at the ſame time productive of worldly happineſs. "Bleſſed are the *meek*, for they ſhall inherit the earth."

M. I have promiſed you, my Father, in the moſt ſolemn manner,

manner, to uſe my endeavours to *be humble*, and I think myſelf ſincere.

T. I believe thou art; but conſider that thy *promiſe* amounts only to this, that thou art determined to uſe the *beſt means* to obtain this *end*. Art thou attentive to *ſuch means*, and determined, without trifling or delay, to put them into practice? Our words, our actions, our thoughts, muſt harmonize with our hopes in a life to come. Whether we toil for the bread we eat, or reliſh its ſweets in eaſe and affluence, it makes no difference with regard to our aſſiduity, in the great buſineſs of preparation for *eternity*, the chief object of which is *walking humbly before God*. To attempt to ſerve him without *humility*, is a contradiction: If we conſider the life and death of our bleſſed Saviour, it is the *hiſtory of humility!* The great leſſons which he taught, are all founded in lowlineſs, and keep it conſtantly in view. His *example* remains on everlaſting record, and powerfully enforces this virtue; for *he* humbled himſelf, even to death!—and died upon the croſs.

M. How forcibly, how ſweetly does he command and invite us to learn of him, when he tells us, that he is meek and lowly; and that if we follow *his* example, we ſhall find *reſt* unto our ſouls.

T. And doſt thou not think a natural inference may be drawn, that there will be *no reſt* for thoſe who are not *meek and lowly?* Be aſſured, that in a religious view, *pride* is the parent of many bad children: every emotion of envy, every ſally of anger, in the ſame manner as every unchaſte deſire, naturally begets another of the ſame kind; and till we conquer ourſelves, we certainly ſhall not be at reſt. The mind is the ſeat of empire, in the little world within us; and if its ſubjects intend to be at peace, they muſt ſuit their temper to their ſtation, as rational and accountable beings, and pay all due reſpect to their ſuperiours.

M. Humility and *repentance for ſins* ſeem to be united.

T. And ſo I believe is the *forgiveneſs* of them. Humility draws away the diſguiſe with which our ſins are covered from our eyes, and brings us to a full ſenſe and acknowledgment of them; and this introduces that repentance and

Repentance as ariſing from humility.

 refor-

reformation, to which the goſpel promiſes the remiſſion of offences. It is not enough to be ſorry for our faults, and to *confeſs* them; we muſt alſo forſake them: if we do not put ourſelves upon our guard, to avoid them for the future, what we have done, will not be accepted as *repentance*; nor ſhall we receive the bleſſing which is promiſed to thoſe who do repent.

M. But ſome, I think, have talked of *repentance*, as different from real amendment of life.

T. And they would have it be ſo: But they forget that ſorrow for what is paſt, ſo far as it goes, is a ſecurity for not committing the ſame offence again; for ſorrow ſuppoſes *pain*, and nobody ſeeks pain for its own ſake, but we all naturally avoid it. Without entering into any nice diſtinctions, conſult thy *conſcience*, *Mary*: if this does not accuſe thee, thou needſt not fear. The proverb ſays, "Do "well and doubt no man; do ill and doubt all men." Whence thou mayſt learn how to be happy by being free from *fear*, and conſequently from all bitter care. If thy conſcience is clear, thou wilt enjoy the higheſt pleaſure here, from a well-grounded hope of happineſs hereafter: but if it is terrified with a ſenſe of guilt, thy life will be full of *painful apprehenſions*, with regard both to the *preſent* and the *future*. Thou, my dear *Mary*, art yet comparatively in a ſtate of *innocency*.—Grant, O heaven, thou mayſt continue in it!—and let me die in peace!—I charge thee to guard againſt the leaſt breach of conſcience. Recollect that every one committing a treſpaſs, is the *priſoner of juſtice*, as ſoon as it is done, whether it be known or not. No one ever offended againſt the dictates of his own heart, but firſt or laſt felt the bitter effects of it. Whenever thou art conſcious of a fault, pray immediately for the forgiveneſs of it *(a)*.

Conſcience the great guide of life.

M. I hope

(a) For Repentance under a conſciouſneſs of Malice, Revenge, Falſhood, Covetouſneſs, Treachery, irregular Deſires, or any particular Offence.

Moſt merciful God! I beſeech thee, give me ſo deep a ſenſe of the ſin which I have been guilty of, that I may never more offend thee. My *tranſgreſſion* teſtifies againſt me; O let my heart bleed with contrition! Caſt me not away from thy preſence, nor hide thy face in diſpleaſure, but in

M. I hope I ſhall have ſo much virtue, and be always on my guard not to offend. You, my Father, ſeem to be happy in the peace of your conſcience: If I knew your rules of preſerving it, I would endeavour to follow them.

T. There can be no rules equal to thoſe contained in the ſcriptures, from whence I have drawn mine, though I have fallen far ſhort of them. It is true I have delighted in *mercy*, though ſometimes inadvertently cruel in *words*, if not in *actions*. I have not always made ſufficient allowances for the *weakneſs of other men*, and conſequently have not ſufficiently *diſcovered my own*. Many have been *my* tranſgreſſions, of many kinds; and where ſhall I ſeek for the peace which thou thinkeſt I enjoy, but in ſincerely repenting at the throne of the Almighty, and putting my truſt in his mercy promiſed in the goſpel, through his Son our bleſſed Lord and Mediator.

With reſpect to my preſent conduct, be contented with knowing, that in oppoſition to my ſins and infirmities, I have ever been anxious to find out, and to do ſuch things as are acceptable to God.—And in order to perform this effectually, I very frequently examine the ſtate of my mind, and reckon upon every day as my laſt, ſo far I mean as regards a *clear account* with heaven: this I apprehend is the only way of going on in a courſe of conſtant obedience, and preventing a ſurprize by death.

M. Is this the common way which mankind take to preſerve their innocency?

T. Not very common, I am afraid. The thought of death ſeems to be, of all others, the moſt unpleaſing to the generality of the world; and therefore they are far from thinking that the preſent day *may* be their *laſt*.

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in thy great mercy blot out the remembrance of my iniquity. Arm me, O Lord, with reſolution, that I may continually watch my corrupt affections, and *rather die, than oppoſe thy will!* Thus humbly kneeling before thy throne, I beſeech thee, wretched and unworthy as I am, to accept my prayer, and grant me the help of thy holy ſpirit. This I beg, O merciful God, for the ſake of my bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

In the mean time, however, there is no ſtanding ſtill in this buſineſs. We muſt be always *going on improving*, or *giving way* and growing worſe. *Time* never ſtops: our nature ſubjects us to change; all things about us are changeable, and *our* change ſhould always be for the *better: the ſoul longs for perfection*, and virtue hath no bounds ſet to it. Wouldſt thou keep thy conſcience clear, and make it a ſpring of peace and comfort to thee, O my daughter, learn to bear *evil* with patience and reſignation; and to enjoy *good* with moderation and gratitude; and learn *what is good*. Though thou ſhouldſt remain low in *condition*, thou mayſt rank high in *virtue:* but all the wealth in the world will not compenſate for *loſt innocence*. Let a little time paſs, and all the diſtinctions about which mankind make ſuch a buſtle, and often hazard their ſouls, will drop into the grave. The earth will ſoon cover us *all*; and ſhe herſelf will be changed; therefore it is abſurd to be exalted or dejected beyond meaſure, about any thing here below.

Endeavour, I ſay, to be calm and undiſturbed, good and wiſe, even to the laſt. I will venture to aſſure thee, from the variety which I have ſeen in my own life, that *reality* hardly ever equals *imagination*. Our earthly delights are ſeldom ſo ſweet in enjoyment, as they are in expectation; but the pleaſures of a pure mind are always ſweet and lively; never flat, never inſipid; and will go on increaſing till they are perfected in the manſions of infinite bliſs.

M. If any temptation ſhould ever create any extraordinary tumult in my breaſt, or any difficulty ariſe concerning what is right and fit to be done——

T. Bring it immediately to the bar of thy reaſon and conſcience. Reject thy paſſions from being counſellors in the cauſe. Lay aſide all bias and prejudice; *conſider thy God at preſent!* humble thyſelf before him: put thyſelf under his protection; pray to him for ſuccour *(a)*; and depend upon him

(a) For Defence againſt Sin.

Ariſe, O Lord, I beſeech thee, help me and deliver me from all enemies to my ſoul. Thou art my only refuge and ſalvation, O protect me by thy almighty arm, from the ſin which now aſſails me, and give

him that He will, with the temptation, make a way for thee to *eſcape*.

M. I ſee it ſtill comes to this, that as the true happineſs of life depends on a *good conſcience*, ſo a good conſcience depends on acting up to the precepts of our religion.

T. Think, then, O my daughter, of the commands of thy Saviour, and obey them, that *he* may plead thy cauſe. This is the ſum and ſubſtance of religion. He atoned by his blood, for all thy natural infirmities, and for all thy *ſecret* and *unheeded faults*; and with regard to thy *ſins* (for alas! who is free from wilful deviations from their duty) I hope thou wilt ſo repent of them, that his interceſſion may avail to ſave thy *ſoul alive!*

Though reſolution and fortitude of mind are very excellent, and highly neceſſary to the ſupport of virtue, yet be not too confident of thy own ſtrength; but in every circumſtance of thy life, whilſt thou ſtandeſt, *take heed leſt thou fall.* Preſume not on thine own power to withſtand temptations, but *let it be thy ſtudy* to avoid them. Conſider how eaſily thou mayſt fall, if thou runneſt raſhly into danger; but thou art certainly ſafe, while thou keepeſt at a diſtance from it: And believe me, in our preſent circumſtances, even to *avoid* danger and *flee* temptation, requires no ſmall degree of *courage* and *reſolution.*

Danger of purſuing a life of pleaſure.

M. Life is ſo beſet on every ſide with danger, as to require a ſtrict watch; and you may depend I will engrave your leſſons on my heart. But pray tell me, my Father, do thoſe who have been moſt devoted to the pleaſures of this world, and have had the greateſt means of indulgence, entertain any pleaſing remembrance of them?

T. If thou meaneſt only a life of *amuſement*, I believe there

give me ſtrength to triumph over all the deluſions of this world. Inſpire me with holy reſolution and fortitude of mind, and let thy grace direct my heart, that neither the threats nor promiſes, the fears or hopes which this world creates, may prevail upon me to betray or violate my conſcience; but being conſtant and unſhaken, I may act as becomes a chriſtian, and ſuffer the acuteſt miſery of poverty and pain, reproach and inſolence, rather than offend thee! Grant this, O merciful God, for the ſake of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt!

there can be no real ſatisfaction in reflecting upon ſcenes of mirth and feſtivity, or diverſion; they paſs away like a dream; the pleaſure periſhes with the moment of the enjoyment: and the queſtion cannot be aſked concerning *ſinful gratifications*; for it is very clear, that the remembrance of them is armed with the ſtings of ſcorpions: and obſerve, *Mary*, that if the ſoul retains her habits, after ſeparation from the body, as I believe ſhe does, we muſt *now* acquire a habit of virtue, and delight in it, or how is it poſſible for *heaven itſelf* to make us happy?

M. Indeed I ſee not how it can be: but are you ſure that *virtue* here has any foretaſte of her rewards?

T. I think this is as ſure as that *vice* ſuffers an inward foreboding and ſenſe of miſery. To judge from what we ſee and underſtand of the common concerns of life, it is moſt reaſonable to conclude, that a *clear conſcience* is a continual feaſt, and the moſt glorious pleaſure. This is always blooming, always affording a ſucceſſion of delightful entertainment; but "a wounded ſpirit who can bear?"

I remember a proverb which my maſter uſed to repeat, and which, I think he ſaid he had learned in SPAIN. "He "that loſeth wealth, loſeth much; he who loſeth a friend, "loſeth more; but he that loſeth his *ſpirit*, loſeth *all*." And if this be applicable to the common affairs of life, how much more is the latter part true, when applied to a *wounded conſcience!* To feel the wound, is one part of its cure; provided we keep it open till proper remedies are applied; and inſtead of ſkinning it over, or diverting the pain, are ready to undergo the moſt ſevere probe or inciſion, which may be effectual to the recovery.

M. I am afraid that many are not ſenſible of the ſtate of their conſciences, till they are called to a ſerious conſideration of it, by the approach of death!

T. There is too much reaſon to apprehend this to be the caſe; and when it ſo happens, it fares with them as with riotous *ſpendthrifts*, when they muſt pay their debts: "They "have declined coming to account from a diſtruſt of their "inability to pay, till at length they are totally incapable "of making any ſatisfaction," and the *hand of juſtice* overtakes

takes them. Think, O my dear *Mary*, that divine juſtice comes with *leaden feet*; yet if we perſiſt in our offences, it will ſtrike with *iron hands*. Heaven preſerve thy ſoul unſpotted from the world!

The providence of God towards man, his great comfort.

Tell me, my daughter, haſt thou had thought enough to entertain a ſteady perſuaſion, ſuch as thou haſt of the familiar concerns of life, that there is a *Providence* which rules over all; and that a hair doth not fall from the head, but it is ſeen by the all-piercing eye of God?

M. I am convinced of this; but the affairs of the world too often put it out of my thoughts. I will endeavour hereafter to live under a conſtant and ſteady conviction of it: and indeed when we reflect, how can we think of *God*, but as we think of his *providence* ruling over us?

T. Thou haſt anſwered well: let thy acknowledgments be ſuited to thy belief *(a)*. In all the affairs of men, it is evident that there is a Providence which governs and overrules: the ſacred writings are hiſtories of *Divine Providence*: All that is recorded in them, was to ſerve ſome great end; and what could this be, but that men ſhould know the will of God, and how he intereſts himſelf in regard to them; and learn from *example* as well as *precept*, what part they are to act themſelves. The *Almighty* would not exact our *obedience*, without telling us what his laws are: nor can *we* be ſo ſtupid as to imagine he hath *given us laws*, and at the ſame time, left us at liberty whether we will obey them or not. No wiſe governor upon earth acts thus; how much leſs the King of Kings, and the all-wiſe Ruler of heaven and earth!

Thou ſeeſt what God hath done for us, in making ſuch a world (as it appears to us) *only for our uſe*; but *we* are moſt cer-

(a) In Acknowledgment of Divine Providence.

O Lord, thou great preſerver of mankind, accept my deepeſt gratitude and moſt exalted praiſe, for thy repeated mercies and protection. Thy hand, O God, hath ſupported me from my birth until now! Teach me to conſider the end of thy goodneſs, and make my ſenſe of thy *preſent* mercy, a ſtronger obligation to my *future* obedience, and an earneſt of thy love towards me, unworthy as I am. This I beg, O merciful Lord, through Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer.

certainly made for *his glory*, in the *true uſe* of it: otherwiſe what is the end of our creation, or what the rewards which he has propoſed to us? The *applauſe* of the world is a ſmall object indeed: yet virtue receives ſome reward here, tho' ſhe diſdains to ſeek it where this world *only* is concerned; for that would be in effect to ceaſe to be virtuous; but how vaſt is the reward which is promiſed in a *life to come!* We do not underſtand the ways of nature in the viſible world, nor conſequently of *Providence*; therefore we cannot always draw *certain concluſions* concerning the events of life, what is *good*, or what is *beſt* for us. We ſee ſo much patience exerciſed towards the moſt wicked, that we are ſometimes almoſt induced to murmur againſt Providence, and to ſay there is no God who judgeth in the earth.

M. But is there not cauſe to believe that men are oftener puniſhed, ſome way or other, than is generally apprehended? and does not *reaſon* teach us, that it is the *goodneſs* of God which affords them ſo much time for repentance, that they may not fall into deſtruction?

T. Indeed I believe they are oftener puniſhed than is known. And whether *reaſon* teaches us, for what cauſe almighty vengeance is with-held, or not, we are ſure *religion* does; for it is expreſsly declared in the ſcriptures. On the other hand, we learn, when we ſee good men afflicted, which frequently happens to ſome, during the whole courſe of a long life, that it is but an exerciſe of their faith, and advances them in their progreſs to perfection. There needs no extraordinary powers of underſtanding to reconcile ſuch events. "We ought to think ourſelves happy, that we "know enough to make us happy. If we are not ſo *happy* "as we deſire, it is well we are not ſo *miſerable* as we de- "ſerve. Every one has *received* more *good* than they have "*done*; and *done* more *evil* than they have *ſuffered*." This ſeems to be a fair and a candid ſtate of things. Providence is ſtill indulgent in whatever happens here, to keep us in mind of what *may happen* in the world of ſpirits, where the righteous Judge of mankind will determine what our ſtate ſhall be. Every thing is ordered with infinite *goodneſs*, *wiſdom*, and *mercy*; but it is ordered with *juſtice* too. Not-

withſtanding the imperfections of our nature, *we* now ſee what is *right* and *fit to be done* in moſt caſes, and puniſh great offences according to *laws:* and how can any one be ſo ſtupid as to imagine that God, who is the fountain of reaſon, and the perfection of *wiſdom*, will not diſpoſe of us agreeably to the wiſdom and juſtice of his everlaſting commandments?

M. Nothing can be more reaſonable to believe than this! How comes it, my Father, that *wiſe men* puzzle their brains ſo much about *religious* doctrines and opinions? I have heard that there are millions of books written upon ſuch ſubjects; and that ſome are upon points which the authors themſelves never comprehended.

T. I cannot tell thee much about perſons whom thou calleſt *wiſe men*; or, as I ſuppoſe, thou meaneſt *learned men*; only that I think, thou art happier than thoſe who take pains to perplex themſelves. Do thou endeavour to pleaſe God in that which thou perceiveſt to be right; and whenever thy *conſcience* even whiſpers thee that any thing is wrong; whenever there is any doubt, which affords a preſumption, that what thou art about to ſay, or do, will be diſpleaſing to God, forbear and avoid it. Never offend againſt the law of thine own mind!—Conſider, that the tranſient pleaſures of the preſent life are nothing, when put in competition with our duty; but the happineſs or miſery of the life to come ſhould be the ſubject of thy thoughts, to urge thee on to *good*, or reſtrain thee from *evil*. I am under no anxiety on thy account, but that thy life be *virtuous*; the reſt will follow: for whilſt thou art good, thou never wilt be forſaken of God, or totally rejected by thy fellow-creatures: but if thou ſhouldſt become *wicked*, even though the world ſhould ſmile upon thee with all its blandiſhments; though all things ſhould wear a pleaſing aſpect, yet in the *end*, as ſurely as the wicked will be puniſhed, thou wouldſt be miſerable.

M. My dear Father, I am fully ſenſible of your goodneſs to me; I know how great your care and anxiety is for my welfare, and I hope I ſhall never forget that *miſery* and *pain with virtue*, are far preferable to all the pleaſures which this world can afford, *without it*.

T. We have often talked, *Mary*, of *courage* in religious

concerns: Haſt thou reaſoned thyſelf into *reſolution?* Haſt thou the heart of a *man?* There is nothing ſo daring, which hath not been done, even by thy ſex, when ſome great motive of *hope* or *fear*, *love* or *revenge* has operated ſtrongly in the mind: Many have laughed at death itſelf, when in purſuit of their favourite object.

M. If a weak or vicious paſſion hath carried people ſuch lengths, what ought to be expected where *reaſon* and religion unite in the ſame cauſe; where the conſcience applauds, and heaven itſelf is preſented before our eyes. O my Father, I ſhall ſtrive to arm myſelf for all events, death not excepted.

T. We all look for *happineſs*, but how are we to find it, if we are afraid; and how can we ceaſe to fear, if we ſtray from the paths of virtue? Whatever concerns life, the more *neceſſary* it is, the more naturally it preſents itſelf to us, and we all ſeek that which we imagine will be moſt productive of our *happineſs!* If virtue be our ſupreme good, ſhall we not ſeek it with *all* our heart? All other deſires are bounded by this world, but virtue hath no bounds!

M. My deſires go not beyond *food*, *raiment*, *health*, *peace of mind*, and the *hopes* which religion preſents to my view.

T. Theſe are very reaſonable deſires; yet they are the higheſt things we mortals can enjoy!

M. Why then is ſo great a part of the world ſo much more eager after riches, than they are after virtue?

T. Becauſe the greateſt part of the world think and act fooliſhly. My maſter uſed to ſay of *money*, the great *idol of the world*, that "we ought to have it in our heads, but "not in our hearts." Common prudence teaches the uſe and value of it; but if once it takes hold of our affections, and commands our judgment, it becomes as poiſon to the ſoul. *Religion*, on the other hand, muſt be in our *hearts*, or it will not be in our *heads:* Let us ſeek for that to which we may *ſafely* apply in *all* the various diſtreſſes to which life is ſubject. To *whom* can we appeal, but to *God*, and to his *word*, as contained in the ſcriptures? This we are commanded to read; not as children, but to mark, learn, and digeſt them in our thoughts.

M. I re-

M. I remember what you have already told me on this ſubject.

T. I am glad thou doſt: I now mean to add, that it is not the cuſtom of our times, even for *parents* to *command* their children, after a certain age, with reſpect to religious duties: It is preſumed, that where the freedom of the heart is exerciſed, it may be in vain to do more than *remind* them of their danger. It appears, however, to be a ſtrange kind of careleſſneſs in parents, to give up a point of ſuch *importance*, or leave it ſo much to *chance*. *Neglect of parents.*

M. I am happy in having a Father who is ſo attentive to my everlaſting intereſt!

T. Why, *Mary*, thoſe who mind this world ſo much, as to be regardleſs of him who made the world, are at beſt very trifling beings; and the more wiſdom and ſuperiority they affect on this account, the more *fooliſh*, and *baſe* they appear. I have known ſome rich families, where it would amaze thee to underſtand how *careleſs*, and conſequently how *ignorant* the children were, even when grown up; and if youth paſſes in this manner, what is to be expected in age? I have alſo remarked in what perpetual terrors the lives of many paſs, from the fear of death, created by every ſlight diſorder. Better were it they had not been born, than thus to flutter about like butterflies, with gaudy wings for a few ſummers, and then ſink into the grave! Thoſe who do not make it their firſt concern to account with heaven, are ſuſpended by a hair, being every day ſubject to ſink into everlaſting deſtruction.

M. I tremble to think of this ſituation. So far from envying the condition of ſuch people, they appear as objects of my deepeſt compaſſion. I flatter myſelf I ſhall always pay a due regard to your advice and example; and conſider you as the gracious inſtrument of heaven, in conducting me to everlaſting happineſs. Not alarmed at a *cholic* or a *headach*; nor frightened when *death* ſhakes his dart; I hope to be able to *meet* him as my *friend*, whenever it ſhall pleaſe the Almighty: and therefore wiſh for *your* commands, my Father, *though it were to die!*

Uſefulneſs of conſtant reading the ſcriptures.

T. I thank thee, my dear girl! And ſince thou art ſo determined, hear what I am going to ſay, and write it on the tablet of thine heart—Read the New Teſtament every day of thy life, though it ſhould be but a *verſe or two:* This will ſupply thee with good thoughts: With humble heart lend a patient ear to theſe oracles of God: Read what thou clearly comprehendeſt: Tranſcribe that which thou readeſt, into thine heart, and cheriſh it in thy boſom. A minute's reading may furniſh an ample fund of admirable entertainment and improvement for the whole day.

Children at ſchool are frequently diſtreſſed by the *taſk* which is ſet them; and diſguſted with reading the *ſacred writings*, before they in the leaſt comprehend the importance of them. They begin too ſoon: they are overwhelmed with *quantity:* the portion is injudiciouſly choſen: it is not properly read and repeated to them, nor adapted to their tender mind: They are not ſtruck with *awe* as they ought to be; and thus the ſcriptures, when forced on them, are rendered irkſome; and from hence many are negligent in this great article all the remainder of their lives.

M. I am afraid, from the little I know of the world, that this is true in a degree ſhocking to think of in a *chriſtian* land.

T. If people would attend, with a *good heart*, to the circumſtances of the life and death of Chriſt, what he *did* and *ſuffered* for us, what he hath *commanded* us to do, and what he hath *forbidden*, we ſhould acquire a very different turn of thought, from that which is generally found amongſt us, and however we may ſhew a repugnance, as if it would abridge our pleaſures, our days would paſs in far greater joy. Theſe *leſſons* are neceſſary *at all times*; but we are apt to forget the very ſignification of the word *leſſon*; and yet, I ſay, if we do not learn, and reliſh them too, whilſt we are in youth, how are we to form our taſte, and model our lives, as we advance in years? If we dwell on the ſenſe contained in the ſcriptures, and conſider them as the words of *eternal life*, we ſhall find the road to a happy eternity. O *Mary!* what numbers of years have the moſt part of mankind, of my age,

ſquan-

ſquandered away! How often have I offended againſt my own reaſon! *My* Father died while I was yet an infant: I had no monitor in him, as thou haſt in me: Experience now qualifies me to be thy inſtructor: O my daughter, may my words ſink into thine heart! May God give a bleſſing to them; may they make thee *wiſe* and *happy!*——

M. My Father!——You know my heart: You know how much I love and honour you as the inſtrument of heaven, in giving me a being, and providing for that being; how much more do I love and honour you for thus endeavouring to render my being happy, by leading me into the paths of everlaſting life?

The conſequences of good and evil.

T. My dear child, thou wilt not think my inſtructions tedious, while I thus open my heart to thee! Whatever ſhall befall us, when we are *parted*, let us never forget that the time will come when only ſuch leſſons, well learnt, can avail us: but there is but one way to learn them truly, and that is to practiſe them. Couldſt thou take a ſurvey of all the ſplendor of the world; all that beauty, ſenſe, or wealth can give, and be aſſured of the poſſeſſion of it, what would it avail? Wouldſt thou prefer it to thy duty to thy God, and the hopes of a happy eternity? Thou haſt no property but thy good mind, and the work which thy hands can do: perhaps in the iſſue it may be ſo much the happier for thee. All things conſpire to warm thy heart, to ſtrengthen thy reaſon, to animate thy vigilance in the cauſe of virtue. Thy want of riches, is, in many reſpects, freedom from temptation; and may thus become a faithful friend and a powerful patron, to promote thee to honour and never-ceaſing happineſs. Such is the kindneſs of heaven, in that which is *with-held*, as well as in that which is *beſtowed*. And now I charge thee to remember, that all the thoughts and actions of our lives, are attended with their certain *conſequences*. *Good* and *evil* are unchangeable; and, ſtrictly ſpeaking, there is nothing good or evil, but what is *virtuous* or *vicious*. What is *that* knowledge which does not direct and govern our lives; or what the *worldly* goods which are not employed agreeably to the deſigns of Providence?——In the early days

days of my life, I learnt from my maſters books and diſcourſe, that even *heathens* concluded, from the diſtreſs in which *virtue* is ſometimes involved; and the ſplendor in which *vice* frequently triumphs, that there muſt be a *ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death*; and accordingly my maſter told me, that their ancient poets repreſented this ſtate, in very ſtrong and ſignificant terms. *They* had no clear lights to guide them; *we have* ſuch lights: how great therefore will be our puniſhment, if we *walk in darkneſs!*

M. No man on earth has been in heaven or in hell, to tell us what is paſſing there; but the *word of God* gives us as much information in this matter, as is neceſſary for us to know in our mortal ſtate; and as much I think as is ſufficient to influence our lives, and make us virtuous and good.

T. Well haſt thou ſpoken, *Mary*; and if men believe not the word of God as contained in the ſcriptures, "neither "would they be perſuaded though one ſhould riſe from the "dead." Yet the more we realize to ourſelves the ſcenes of future *joy* and *miſery*, and the more we reflect upon them, the greater effect will they have upon us. Could I, my dear *Mary*, "repreſent to thee the different ſtates of *good* and "*bad* men: Could I give thee the proſpect which the bleſ-"ſed martyr St. *Stephen* had; and ſhew thee the bleſſed "JESUS, at the right hand of God, ſurrounded with an-"gels, and *the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*: Could I open "thine ears to hear the never-ceaſing hymns of praiſe, "which the bleſſed above *ſing to Him that was, and is, and "is to come: to the Lamb that was ſlain, but liveth for ever!* "Could I lead thee through the unbounded regions of "eternal day, and ſhew thee the mutual and unbounded "joys of ſaints, who are at reſt from their labour, and live "for ever in the preſence of God!—Or could I change the "ſcene, and unbar the iron-gates of *hell*, and carry thee "through ſolid darkneſs, to *the fire that never goes out*, and "*to the worm that never dies*: Could I ſhew thee the apoſtate "angels, faſt bound in chains, or the ſouls of wicked men "overwhelmed with torment and deſpair: Could I open "thine ears to hear the deep itſelf groan with the continual "cries

" cries of miſery; cries which can *never* reach the throne of " mercy, but return in ſad echoes, and even add to the " very horrors of hell:" Could I do this, my daughter, I ſhould rouſe every faculty of thy ſoul, and arm thee with a triple ſhield, to guard thee againſt the dangers to which thou art expoſed.

M. O my Father, this is affecting beyond expreſſion! this is enough to rouſe the moſt indolent; to alarm the moſt abandoned ſinner; and to bring all men to repentance!

T. Alas my daughter! would to heaven it were ſo! then might I ſay of the *effects* of the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, what old *Simeon* ſaid of *Chriſt himſelf*, " Now let thy ſervant depart " in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen the ſalvation which " thou haſt prepared." Thou, *Mary*, judgeſt from an honeſt, but an unexperienced heart. The deſcription I have juſt given, is animated and pathetic, not viſionary or fanatical; it contains the words of a great ſtateſman, philoſopher, and divine *(a)*, drawn from the ſcriptures; and thou mayſt plainly perceive in them the moſt nervous ſenſe, and the moſt manly piety; free from the bitter ſighs of melancholy, the falſe fears of ſuperſtition, or the irregular warmth of enthuſiaſm.

Revolve it calmly in thy thoughts; view it as the genuine produce of a ſtrong underſtanding, a lively imagination, and a good heart. Make it thine own, by recollection; and *live*, as if thou hadſt the glories of heaven in thy view! Thus, by the *mercies of God*, thou wilt ere long arrive in thoſe bliſsful regions, which the learned and judicious prelate has ſo beautifully deſcribed; there to ſing *hallelujahs* before the throne of the *Almighty*, in the tranſcendent glory of the *One Supreme*, and partake of that happineſs which ſurpaſſes *all deſcription*, and will endure *for ever and ever!*

(a) Dr. Sherlock, late Biſhop of London, Vol. III. Diſcourſe I.

WEEK II.

FRIDAY.

CONVERSATION VIII.

T. A WEEK is now paſt ſince you and I began to have ſet converſations upon ſerious ſubjects. This is but a ſhort period, *Mary*, in the uſual meaſurement of time; and yet much may be *learnt in it*, when people have a mind to be inſtructed.

Progreſs of time.

M. Many, perhaps, at this moment, would give the world for a ſingle day.

T. I believe there are ſome in ſuch unhappy circumſtances, but thy principles are ſo well ſettled, as to guard and prepare thee for that ſtate, from which they are ſo anxious for a few hours *reprieve*.

M. The information you gave me laſt night, relating to both worlds, was ſo very ſatisfactory and ſo very affecting, that I believe it will have a powerful and a conſtant influence upon my temper and conduct through life.

T. We have talked a great deal about different opinions in religion, and the diſputes and diſagreements which have ariſen from them: I hope what was ſaid will ſtrengthen and confirm thee; and improve, not injure thy *humanity*; for this is the foundation ſtone on which all virtue is built.

M. I have examined my heart upon this matter, and find I have as much charity for ſuch as differ from me, as for thoſe

thoſe that agree with me: if the former are the greateſt lovers of virtue, they are for the ſame reaſon the moſt amiable, and therefore ought to be the moſt eſteemed and honoured.

T. There is but one way, *Mary*, by which we can eſtabliſh peace among men.

M. I wiſh you would tell me what it is, for I love peace and harmony as I love my ſoul.

T. I mean the *cultivation of humanity*, that the various ſentiments of mankind may not divide the world. Some convert themſelves into *monſters*, and devour their own ſpecies. Difference of *complexion*, laws, cuſtoms, or language; or being of the ſame country, yet not of the ſame opinion in politics or religion, are not ſufficient grounds for the leaſt degree of *inhumanity*. The occaſions which create moſt miſchief to ſociety, are generally trifling in themſelves, and *accidental:* but conteſts not ſupported with decency, and a due regard to truth and virtue, ſhew how much we forget what *man* ſhould be to *man*.

M. Do you think that the true exerciſe of *humanity* would make the world happy?

The exerciſe of humanity the true foundation of peace.

T. Indeed I believe, that if we acted agreeably to the laws of humanity, or the impulſe of our *nature*, corrected by our religion, we ſhould be always ſollicitous to promote the welfare of our fellow-creatures, and render them as happy as they can be.

M. Every one muſt be conſcious of ſome infirmities; and no man, I think, can be hard-hearted to others, without feeling ſome degree of pain himſelf.

T. Frailty is the lot of human nature: it is folly to expect infallibility in judgment, or total freedom from ſin; but our humanity, with reſpect to each other, corrects theſe defects: it is active, modeſt, inoffenſive, and anxious to better the condition of mankind: whilſt the doing nothing from any other motive than a *command*, and without feeling that we were *framed* to do it with pleaſure, is *injuſtice* to our Maker.

He that knows what belongs to *humanity*, will be ſincere

to his fellow-creatures; and conſidering what human nature is, make large allowances for its defects. We cannot exerciſe our humanity without receiving back, with intereſt, the pleaſure we beſtow.

M. How comes it, that ſo many born in *chriſtian* civilized countries, ſo far neglect the cultivation of their humanity, that they ſeem to have no feeling for others.

T. If they attended to their own make and condition as ſocial beings, or conſidered how much they are indebted to others for the protection afforded them, during their infancy and childhood: if they thought of thoſe duties which the Great Author of Nature requires of them, they would be humane. Humanity comprehends all ranks and conditions: its ſound is gone out into all lands, and its voice unto the ends of the earth: thoſe who do not obey it, are monſters in human ſhape, for the *brutes* obey the proper dictates of their nature.

To weep is *our peculiar prerogative*; to ſympathize with human woes, is acting the part of a man. The *leading* principle of humanity is to conſider that we are creatures of one common nature; and the more we exerciſe this principle, the more our condition is improved: nothing can alter its laws, or revoke its ordinances; and a ſtrict obſervance of theſe rules, would perfect the *peace*, not only of private perſons, but alſo of nations: wars would ceaſe throughout the world, and univerſal love take place, and reign in every heart.

M. Theſe are high commendations of humanity: would to God I could ſee the day when it ſhould be univerſally exerciſed!

T. To ſay *a man is humane*, is no more than to ſay *he is a man*, and has the properties of a rational being: but the contrary character makes us think of a bear, a wolf, or a lion. My obſervation is not the leſs true, on account of the improbability, that we ſhall ever ſee humanity fully diſplayed; and as a proof that what I have ſaid is founded in our nature, I appeal to *thy heart*, *Mary*, if any thing affords ſo great a pleaſure, as the doing a *proper* kindneſs, even to

the *undeſerving*, except promoting the happineſs of the diſtreſt, or the deſerving? "Is any object ſo pleaſing to the "eye, as the ſight of the perſon whom we have obliged; "or any muſic ſo agreeable to the ear, as the voice of one "that owns us for a benefactor?"

M. Though we are all confeſſedly creatures of one common nature, does not the exerciſe of our humanity towards each other, depend on our religion?

T. Bad muſt be the religion which does not require the exerciſe of humanity: ſome nations who live ſtill in groſs ignorance, are very humane: others, whoſe manners are corrupted by wars and a habit of ſpilling blood, as I have heard my maſter ſay, ſeem to have extinguiſhed this heavenly fire. The *religion* we profeſs is moſt remarkable, by its correſpondency with the dictates of humanity: the only *perfect man* was the moſt tender and humane! The Almighty, who gave us our religion, requires of us to be the inſtruments of his Providence; and he hath annexed ſo exalted a pleaſure to the performance of the duty which man owes to man, that no other pleaſure equals it. Kindneſs and benignity of temper flowing from *humanity*, lead to every thing truly generous and good. Nothing is more beautiful in our nature; and when improved by the *chriſtian religion*, we claim affinity with *angels*. As dew which falls gently from the heavens, aſſwages the ſcorching *heat* of the ſun, ſo words and deeds of humanity have a reſiſtleſs force in ſoftening the bitterneſs of anger and reſentment, and turning their edge againſt themſelves.

M. According to this lovely deſcription which you give of humanity, if all the world was humane, differences in opinion would never create any animoſity. But as it is, we do not much ſtudy how to bear with other people's defects; and ſtill leſs how to diſcern their good qualities: the queſtion is, which of theſe requires the moſt ſenſe and virtue?

T. I believe they generally keep pace with each other; and you mayſt be aſſured, that whatever tends moſt to correct ourſelves, is the readieſt way to reform the reſt of the world.

As to the different opinions which prevail, God forbid that thou ſhouldeſt look upon any one as a foe to heaven, merely becauſe he thinks differently from thee; or be an enemy to any perſon, who, as far as thou knoweſt, is a friend to God. Whatever reaſon and experience teach us to be *true*, in regard to the accidental different turn of men's thoughts, humanity teaches us to compaſſionate We know, for inſtance, that the advocates for a faith not commonly received, are diſtinguiſhed by their preſuming ſo much on being in the right, that what we call candour or moderation, is, in their eyes, *cowardiſe*, and giving up their faith: and if they conſider their own notions as *infallible truths*, it is a vain taſk to oppoſe them.

M. There ſeems to be a great difference between not agreeing in opinion, and quarrelling for the ſake of it. And I do not apprehend, from your notions of humanity, that there is much depth or knowledge wanting, for men to underſtand their duty to their neighbour.

T. Plain *natural good ſenſe* is no ſcience; but this, and a good heart, are of more value than all the learning in the world. "The opportunity of *knowledge*, *will be after this life*; but the only opportunity of *doing good*, *and acting humanely*, *is now*. If thou takeſt care to improve this, thou art ſufficiently ſecure of the other; but if this be neglected, all is loſt."

M. Do you think in general that we are doing *good*, when we endeavour to avoid *evil?*

T. So it ſeems; but this is not the *only good* required of us.

M. As we have all an equal claim to forbearance and charity; if others do not moleſt nor injure me in my right of judging, I ſhall give them the ſame meaſure.

T. Thy rule of conduct in this particular ſhould depend on thine own heart and religion, and not on the example of others, which may happen to be wrong. With regard to the various conteſts, which divide mankind, we may as well endeavour to propagate a belief by fire and ſword, as to bring about *agreement* in matters depending on the freedom of the mind, by any kind of violence. For tho'

there

there is ſomething "like a miracle in *truth*, which forcibly "carries the mind along with it; and men, being by *nature* "reaſonable creatures, *naturally* embrace the dictates of *rea-* "*ſon*; yet there are ſome matters, wherein truth cannot be "eaſily diſcovered;" eſpecially by thoſe whoſe eyes are clouded by groſs prejudices, ariſing from early impreſſions in education, or weakneſs of underſtanding, for which they may not be accountable. I remember to have heard my maſter remark, that opinion is a *monſter*, half *truth*, and half *falſhood*; but that if we take a calm and diſpaſſionate view of it, we ſhall probably diſcover where the fallacy lies.

M. I perceive how much the virtue of my own mind depends on my *humanity*, by whatever faith I may be diſtinguiſhed; and this ſeems to be a neceſſary preparative to follow the great Lord and teacher of the chriſtian world!

T. We muſt be *humanized* before we can be true *chriſtians*. In the mean while, humanity is of high value; not only as it implies a virtuous diſpoſition and a good heart, but as it prompts us to acts of benevolence, and enables us to *do good*, Eſteem is not always regulated with juſtice, nor do the beſt men conſtantly ſucceed beſt, therefore prepare and ſtand thy ground ſteadily, whether *good* or *evil* report be made of thee.

M. Would it not be a great encouragement to virtue, if eſteem and good opinion were always to be the immediate effects of it?

T. Upon my word, I doubt this very much: for a part of the virtue of mankind conſiſts in *patience* under unjuſt reproaches, and in referring their cauſe to heaven. Good opinion is frequently beſtowed with great *truth* and *propriety*; and when it is ſo, it becomes valuable in proportion to our zeal and humanity: But in many inſtances it is abſurd, or of no uſe to our *ſouls* or *bodies:* it does not increaſe our happineſs, nor leſſen our miſeries. Wiſe men, under all circumſtances, are contented to put themſelves under the guidance of *reaſon* and *prudence*, which generally conducts

conducts them right: "and if we follow reaſon and re-
"ligion, let approbation follow us, if it pleaſes; if it will
"not, it is a ſign that it is not good for much."

Complaint the common condition of mortals.

M. I thank you, my Father: you arm me at all points; but I am ſorry to obſerve, that ſo great a part of mankind ſpend a large portion of their time in *fruitleſs diſputes*, or in *complaints* of *others*, or of *themſelves*.

T. This is a common fault, and therefore I warn thee of the evil: when it anſwers no good purpoſe, it can be no proof of *wiſdom*. Thoſe who know but little of the world, or of themſelves, are the moſt apt to complain of others: thoſe who have a conſiderable degree of knowledge of both, frequently accuſe themſelves: but the *wiſe* and *experienced* complain neither of themſelves nor of others, unleſs there is a ſolid foundation for it. I am ſpeaking of the events of life which are untoward and mortifying, and yet unavoidably happen even to the wiſeſt. Do thou, my child, cultivate in thine heart a diſpoſition to be *pleaſed* when thou ſeeſt *good*; and be not diſmayed when thou beholdeſt *evil*. Complaints are the produce of every ſoil, and under all the various circumſtances of life. We came into the world weeping; and we weep for the evils we find in it: and yet we are again much diſturbed at the thought of parting with it. Few of us learn truly *what it is*; we grow fond of it, becauſe we are *ignorant of it*; and we quarrel with it again, becauſe we are ignorant of *ourſelves*.

M. If this be the ſtate of life, there is ſo much the greater cauſe for *reaſonable* beings to be reconciled to the thoughts of parting with it.

T. As creatures of one common nature, endued with ſuch noble principles of action, yet limited to ſo ſhort a time to act in, one might hope that only love and harmony would be found here on earth; but the contrary is ſo true, that nothing is without its mixture: yet we ought not to complain, there being ſo much reaſon to fear, from what we ſee, that if it were otherwiſe, even the *good* might be wedded to this world, and their virtues clouded, if not defaced:

and we have ſtill very ſtrong and ſufficient reaſon to be contented, and to rejoice.

M. It becomes us to adore the *providence* of God, and be thankful for the portion of *good* he hath given to us; and not arraign the wiſdom of the great Creator and Governor of the world!

T. True, my dear *Mary:* he who ſees the *paſt*, the *preſent*, and the *future*, can be the *only true judge*. Fools find fault with his government; and *profane perſons* grumble and are diſcontented: yet the *religion* which God hath given *us*, to be our comfort and guide, inſpires ſuch a perſuaſive benevolence, as ſilences all complaints: it charms the mind to peace, and diffuſes joy over the earth. If its divine properties are not attended to, it is our fault, to whom it is propoſed: for *ignorance*, ariſing from careleſſneſs, will be puniſhed as careleſſneſs itſelf.—And as to *chance*, as we call it, in the various conditions of men, this is the diſpoſition made by the providence of God; and proves good or evil to us, *according to the uſe we make of it*. Affluence ſometimes promotes wiſdom, and oftener obſtructs it; but ſtill *wiſdom* excelleth *folly*, as light excelleth darkneſs; and this is within thy reach; therefore let not the purity of thy thoughts be ſullied by murmur or diſcontent, but rejoice in thy ſubmiſſion under all fortunes.

M. Where ſhall I ſeek for ſuch wiſdom, as will enable me to rejoice?

T. Still doſt thou aſk this queſtion, *Mary!*—But thou art young, and I am thy Father! I beſeech thee to *hear* my anſwer, and attend to the oracles of heaven. "The word "of God moſt high, is the *fountain* of wiſdom, *and her "ways are everlaſting commandments!*" The advice of the Son of God is, "Set thy *affections* on things *above*, and "*not* on things on the earth." This is double inſtruction: Thou art told both what thou *art*, and what thou *art not* to do! Truſt then in thy *religion* for thy defence: this only can be the *glory* of thy end! "Commune with "thine own heart, in thy chamber, and be ſtill;" ſo ſhalt thou learn to rejoice in thy *inclination to be good*, even if thou

thou ſhouldſt have nothing elſe to rejoice in: thy *future happineſs* will then be ever in thy thoughts; and every hour will wear a pleaſing aſpect: thy *happineſs* is already *begun*; thou art now on thy journey to that country, where thou haſt reaſon to hope thy joy will be made perfect and complete.

SATURDAY.

SATURDAY.

CONVERSATION IX.

On Death.

Introduction to the consideration of death.

M. YOU beguiled the hours of our converſation laſt night, in ſo pleaſing a manner, that I have felt myſelf happy ever ſince. Thoſe ſenſations which we diſtinguiſh by the glorious name of *humanity*, have charms to ſooth a ſavage breaſt, or melt a heart of flint. But, my Father, you brought me ſo gently to the *end* of my *journey*, that the entrance on a ſtate after death, ſeemed to have no terrors. I hope there are no *diſputes* amongſt us concerning what is paſſing in the world of ſpirits?

T. If there are any, they muſt certainly remain undecided till we try what *death* is. We cannot know any thing beyond *what is revealed to us.*

M. Pray, my Father, how do the thoughts of death affect *you?*

T. Life and *death* have long been equally poiſed in my thoughts: They ſeem as inſeparably united; for our decay is ſurely as much the work of nature, as our progreſs to maturity. I have conſidered that, at my time of day, I ought to be *indifferent*, and alienate my affections from the world ſo far, as to be ready to part with it at the ſhorteſt notice.

M. But will you oblige me? I wiſh to know your thoughts on death!

T. My thoughts, *Mary*, take in a conſiderable compaſs; and I doubt if ſome of them will pleaſe thee.

M. Why ſhould they not? I am as much intereſted in the ſubject, as any of the children of *Eve*; and I ſhall never meet with ſo good a friend as yourſelf, whoſe care for me extends beyond the grave.

General reflections on death.

T. Well, my dear *Mary*, hear me *patiently*, and I *will* tell thee. Death appears to me, as a remedy for many miſeries, not curable by other means: it is as food to the hungry, and clothes to the naked: whatever our ſorrows or afflictions may be; whatever our pains of body, or anguiſh of mind; death wipes away our tears, and puts an end to our labours; the contemplation of it is balm to the ſoul of him who has a proſpect of happineſs in a life to come. Conſider, *Mary*, that we are *ever dying* whilſt we *live*. Every time we draw our breath, it ſubtracts from our duration *on earth*, as much as it adds to it.

General reflections on life.

M. I do not comprehend your meaning.

T. Why, the longer we live, the more days are added to us; yet every ſuch day brings us the nearer to death.

M. True: and we ought to grow the *better and wiſer every day*, to anſwer the true end of living.

T. We pray to God to enable us to number, or *reckon* our days, with this view, that we may apply our hearts unto *wiſdom*. It would be fooliſh indeed to make a buſtle about *life*, without conſidering the deſign of it; and that we ſhould be temperate in the love of it, is as obvious, as that we ſhould be *temperate in all things*. We purſue a variety of objects, and obtain but *few*; and ſometimes receive but little ſatisfaction when we obtain them; but the wants and neceſſities of many are ſo great, ſuch perſons may be ſaid rather to *ſuffer* life than to *enjoy* it!

M. The miſerable, who are languiſhing in pain, oppreſt with misfortunes, or groaning with anguiſh of mind, can ſurely have but little reliſh for life!

T. And what doſt thou think of thoſe who enjoy every bleſſing, *except a thoughtful concern* for the preſervation of their

their ſouls, which alone can give a true reliſh of life? What is the ſtate of thoſe who droop with *melancholy*, by thinking too ill of their own condition; or of ſuch as are elevated with preſumptuous conceits, and do not ſee that they walk on the verge of a precipice? Do thou, my dear *Mary*, bear life with an *equal mind*; and not vex thyſelf about that which, at beſt, can laſt but a little while. In the great view of our exiſtence through eternity, life is as a ſun-beam playing in the air, diſappearing as the light withdraws. It is ſurely *a ſmall object* to thoſe who have *great* hopes beyond the grave; though it is of great moment to them who have no other happineſs in proſpect than what they find here!

M. Perſons in the ſituation you deſcribe, ſeem to be more pitiable than thoſe who are afflicted with pain, or diſtreſſed by poverty. Do you think, my Father, that it adminiſters much to our happineſs, to be able to view death with indifference?

T. Of all advantages it is the greateſt: If we neither deſire life, nor fear death, but as heaven is pleaſed to diſpoſe of us, then we may be ſaid to enjoy that *peace* which God beſtows, as the greateſt mark of his favour to mortals. This however cannot be the lot of thoſe who are captivated with the dazzling charms of wealth, the faſcinating eſteem of honours, or any worldly object. Nothing but a *ſound judgment*, and an *innocent life* can ſecure it to us!

M. But where are we to find thoſe, whoſe lives are ſo innocent, that they can really ſmile at death?

T. Recollect thyſelf, *Mary:* thou haſt known ſome inſtances: I mean ſuch innocence as conſiſts in a hearty deſire of virtue, and a reſolute purſuit of ſuch objects as are acceptable in the ſight of God. Innocence, without any mixture of guilt, was never found in any of the children of men; except in Him, who was *God* as well as *man!*

M. But is there not ſomething exceedingly dreadful in the thought of death?

T. The thought of death is horrible to *cowards*. If thou haſt reſolution enough to oppoſe *vice*, thou mayſt acquire that firmneſs of mind which has enabled the brave, in all ages, to meet *death* as a friend; or at worſt, as a neceſſary

evil which they muſt ſuffer; therefore ſend up thy prayers to heaven for *a happy death (a)*. Granting it to be an evil, we bear many other evils with the profoundeſt reſignation, why ſhould we not alſo bear this *laſt*, with a good grace? It comes from the ſame hand. Death is a puniſhment inflicted on all the children of Adam; "in him we all die; for "by *ſin* came death;" but behold the arm of God extended forth to relieve, and to ſupport us! For although in *Adam* all die, in *Chriſt* we ſhall all be made alive. Thus by the all-merciful and wiſe appointment of the great Parent of mankind, if death muſt be called an evil, *good* comes out of *evil*.

Love of life.

M. The love of life is ſo natural, that very few, I apprehend, can bring themſelves to an entire reconciliation to the thoughts of parting with it.

T. The weak and daſtardly ſuffer a foreboding of death with every ſlight diſorder; and people of great ſenſibility, are apt to imagine themſelves dying on little occaſions: but the firm, the pious, and the brave, in this ſenſe never die at all. When their hour comes, they *expire*; but death, as an object of terror, ſeems to have very little power over them. Which of the two conditions wouldſt thou chuſe?

M. The deciſion is eaſily made. I confeſs I ſee nothing in

(a) For a Happy Death.

O *eternal God*, thou merciful Father of *men* and *angels*, I beſeech thee in thy goodneſs to arm me with ſuch ſtrength, that the terrors of death may not affright me, nor my ſpirit be diſmayed. Grant that I may triumph in the thought of being delivered from the poſſibility of offending thee! Thou art gracious, and full of mercy! O give me wiſdom to behold with an equal mind, all the fleeting joys and tranſient miſeries of the preſent life, and to look forward beyond the grave to that happy place, where the weary are at reſt!—I have offended thee in numberleſs inſtances!—I have left undone thoſe things which I ought to have done, and I have done thoſe things which I ought not to have done; and therefore I tremble and am afraid: but thou, Lord, art the ſpring of mercy, and the ſtream of univerſal love, to thoſe who are ſorrowful and repent! And thou, bleſſed Redeemer of the world, who didſt pay the ranſom for repentant ſinners, O direct my ſteps towards the manſions of *eternal bliſs*; and bring me with *joy* into the preſence of my *Father* and my *God! Amen.*

in *fear*, but what is mean or painful. But does not fear come from education and habit, as well as from guilt? And my dear Father, I have heard it ſaid, that to blazon death with the *tongue*, and to ſee it with the *eye*, are two very different things.

T. It ſometimes happens indeed, that perſons who talk moſt of death, are the moſt afraid of it; but ſtill it is by *thinking* and *diſcourſing*, that we learn to form true notions of any thing; and many a one has been talked *into* courage. We all adopt *principles*, or rules, which may be right or wrong, according to the books we read, the company we keep, and the meaſure of our underſtanding, whereby we diſcern *good* and *evil*: but perhaps the beſt way to think familiarly of death, is to hold the world in little eſtimation; and this leſſon we ſhould ſoon learn, if we duly conſidered how ſhort and uncertain the tenure of life is.

M. All this I acknowledge; yet ſtill it is glorious *to ſee the ſun*, and to be ſurrounded by the delights which this world affords!

T. Thou talkeſt like one perfectly contented, or from the natural vivacity of youth; but thou doſt not conſider what thou haſt juſt ſaid of the miſerable; nor how ſmall a part of mankind paſs through life, without a large portion of pain and ſorrow. And granting that it is glorious *to behold the ſun*; how much more glorious, and conſequently how much more deſirable, to behold the face of Him who made the ſun, and in whom all glory centers!

M. I cannot deny this, my Father; I ſpeak from my preſent ſatisfaction: and I clearly apprehend, that a true notion of death, is the reward of a graceful ſubmiſſion to neceſſity, and the hopes and expectations of greater happineſs in a life to come.

T. Our *peace* here muſt ariſe from our *faith*, and our *truſt in God* for our ſtate *hereafter*: and we ſhould moderate our love of life, by conſidering that "to live is a *gift*, but to die is "a debt:" and reluctance to pay a debt to our Maker, who intends to make us ſo much the happier by it, is the ſtrongeſt proof of folly and obſtinacy.

M. But has not God, the great Author of Nature, deeply implanted in us the love of life?

T. He hath *deeply* implanted in our breaſt this *love* of life, and the *fear* of death is generally the greateſt of all others; yet, by the force of ſerious reflection, and the exerciſe of manly courage, the *wiſe overcome this fear*; and the *fooliſh* are inſenſible of it.

M. As there is no dependence upon a regular courſe of years, but many are cut off at every age, we had need be always watchful!

T. I have heard my maſter talk with great confidence upon this ſubject, both from his own obſervation, and from approved calculations made for the purpoſes of allowing incomes on lives: perhaps it may adminiſter to thy virtue to know what I gathered from him, concerning the ordinary duration of life.

Computation of the proportion of the deaths of people within certain ages.

M. I ſhould be glad to know what this is.

T. Thou haſt no apprehenſion, child, that thy Father is now trading on the *laſt fifth part* of his ſtock of life *(a)*. Thou ſeeſt me chearful and in good ſpirits, but nature is gradually decaying, and I am *one* in *four* who is to die in *five years (b)*. It is not in my power to pronounce that I ſhall be dead at the end of five years, but this I know, that if I ſhould live beyond this time, a greater proportion than *one* in ſome other *four*, upon a general view of the *chance of life*, will die, as it were in my place.

M. I hope, my dear Father, that the fatal hour may be far more diſtant from you; but theſe are awful conſiderations! Pray what is *my* chance of dying?

T. Doſt thou ſeriouſly make this inquiry, and wouldſt thou draw uſeful inſtruction from my anſwer?

M. I mean to hear you tell me of my own ſtate, in this reſpect, with the ſame calmneſs as you ſpeak of *yours*; and know-

(a) Of 1000 born, 785 are dead by the age of 50, which is ſo very near 4 in 5, we may well ſay that only 1 in 5 remains alive.

(b) From the age of 55 to 60, 38 in 173 die, which is near one in four.

knowing ſo much the more of life, learn how to value and employ it.

T. Why, then, my dear child, hear me and learn. "No-"thing is ſo bold as *truth*, nor ſo chearful as *innocence*." Learn the value of life, from conſidering the *ſhort* and uncertain duration of it. Thy chance is *one* in *five*, to die in *fifteen* years *(a)*. Startle not, it is but one in five! Look round thee — ſee how the ſcythe of *death* mows down the children of men. *Figure* to thyſelf the proceſſion of human life: obſerve the *reality* of what is paſſing before thine eyes: behold the rich and the poor; the wiſe and the fooliſh; the virtuous and the wicked; thoſe who make much noiſe, and thoſe who are never heard of beyond the ſmall circle of a few acquaintance! they all fall into one common grave, which is *always open* and never *full!* The knowledge I now communicate to thee is built on experience, and a ſtrict examination of numbers and real events. It is not that each ſhould attempt to know exactly how long he ſhall live, for this would be highly preſumptuous and abſurd; but in general we may learn from *facts*, what we might not otherwiſe be aware of. Mankind deceive themſelves ſtrangely, my daughter, in regard to the length of their days! Haſt thou not often heard people ſay, when they approach to ſixty, "*Threeſcore years!—Oh this is no age!*

M. It is not the age, I ſuppoſe, at which they think it probable themſelves ſhall die; but I always ſuſpected, that being *parties*, as well as *judges*, they were partial to themſelves.

T. This proves what I told thee before; but we abuſe the kindneſs of Providence, when we put off the work of *repentance and amendment*, on the preſumption of living long. The caſe ſtands thus: we know that ſome live to *threeſcore* years and ten; but we know not, or generally will not believe, that half the number of thoſe who reach to *ſixty*, will be dead before they come to the age of *ſeventy (b)*.

M. Alas

(a) This is founded on 502 of 15 years old, of whom, by the time they reached 30, 94 were dead, ſo that it comes near to one in five.

(b) Of 135 (the remainder of 1000 born) being 60 years of age, before

M. Alas, poor *ten years!*

T. Aye, *Mary*,—poor indeed! and how ſeldom do we conſider that theſe *ten* years are divided out amongſt the number of candidates for life, in broken fragments, ſome having only *one* or *two*, although others have *eight* or *nine*; but one with another, they hardly obtain above *five* or *ſix* years of the *ten*.

M. But do not many live to be fourſcore years of age *(a)*?

T. Very few: only twenty-ſeven in a thouſand: yet every one may aſk, why may not this be my lot? why ſhould not I reach the ſame term? Nay, many are ſo unwilling to die, that they ſeem to envy *ignorance*, *poverty*, and *pain*, where there is a proſpect of living: and the ſtill greater misfortune is, that few live as if the *preſent day* might be their laſt, but ſtill conſider their death as remote.

M. I preſume the *eldeſt*, as well as the *youngeſt* of us, have deſigns and projects, hopes and expectations, which require time for the completion, perhaps beyond the *chance* of their *continuance* in life.

T. No doubt: and it is well for mankind that it is ſo; but ſtill, if they would be happy, their lives muſt be innocent.

M. Seeing that death will come, the *reprieve* ſo fondly deſired by the aged, can remove them but a ſmall diſtance from death.—But is it *really* true, that only 27 in 1000 born, live to be fourſcore?

T. It is certainly ſo, according to the beſt accounts: nor is there any ſecurity for *youth*. The much greater part of mankind die ſo *young*; that taking infants into the account, the life of man does not exceed twenty, or as ſome pretend, *ſeventeen years*. In the ordinary courſe of the vegetable world, *green fruit* is often cut off by a blaſt, by violence, or the various accidents to which it is ſubject. This is in ſome meaſure the caſe of thoſe who die in *youth*: but as fruit that is ripened by time, muſt, in its proper ſeaſon, *fall*, ſo the *aged muſt die*. Nature is the huſbandman that gathers us all in.

M. Young

fore ten years are expired, 63 of them die, which is not far ſhort of the half part, to die before any one reaches to 70 years.

(a) Of 72 perſons (the remainder of 1000 born) being 70 years of of age, by the courſe of mortality, 55 of them die within ten years; and conſequently only 27 of the 1000 remain alive at the age of 80.

M. Young as I am, I have obſerved the rapid progreſs of life: how quickly infants paſs into childhood, childhood into youth, and youth into manhood, ſtill running forward towards its end.

T. And ere long, thou wilt ſee how men ſlip into middle age; then again into what we call *advanced years*, and from thence they ſoon fall into old age. This progreſſion of life, to people of obſervation, appears amazingly quick! Thou heareſt from every ones mouth, "Bleſs me! is it poſſible! It ſeems to be but yeſterday that ſuch an one was *a child!*" It *is* poſſible, indeed, for the fact is really ſo. Nor is it leſs true, that nature keeps nearly an equal pace, as to the numbers that come *into* the world, of both ſexes, and the numbers who march *out* of it, at the ſeveral ſtages of life. Every circumſtance proves to us, that there is a *God*, who ſuperintends all the affairs of *life* and *death*. Thus it is, and thoſe who are captivated with *this* world, or afraid of the *next*, generally reckon upon *years*, even when their ſituation is ſuch, that they have but little ſecurity for *months* or *weeks*, or *days*: They baniſh the thoughts of death, as if the putting him out of their heads, would hinder his approach: And when his fore-runners *ſickneſs* or *age* are at their doors, they are very unwilling to believe, that *death* will follow. He takes ſuch a variety of forms, that we cannot well diſtinguiſh him till we feel his dart!

M. This *calculation* of *lives* is entirely new to me, and indeed ſtartled me at firſt: I did not think the chance of my dying was ſo great; and yet I can myſelf recollect numbers who died between the *fifteenth* and *thirtieth* year of their age.

T. The leſſer hazard of middle age, compared with youth, ariſes from the hardineſs and ſtrength acquired by time; and as we are leſs ſubject to fevers, and the effects of the paſſions of the mind, than when we were young.

M. Surely this is a leſſon which youth ought carefully to learn.

T. It would be productive of happy fruits, if they would attend to it; but alas! in the youthful ſtate, we are generally too giddy to ſee ſuch things in their true light! In the

mean while, the *time of our* death being, for good reaſons, concealed from us, every diſtinct perſon flatters himſelf, that *he* ſhall not be of the number who muſt leave the ſtage of life, within the ordinary period that *experience* points out; and if it were otherwiſe, it is probable the affairs of the world would not be carried on in a proper manner. Providence is indulgent to us, as if it was intended to alleviate the natural abhorrence we have to *death*, and animate our endeavours to take care of *life*, as the choiceſt bleſſing: for though every day brings us nearer to our end, *death never ſeems near*: the time being concealed from us, we enjoy this turn of mind, and ſuffer no fruitleſs pain.

Kindneſs of Providence diſplayed in regard to the time of dying.

M. This is true: and amazing it is to think of!

T. I obſerved the other day, two of my acquaintance, both far gone in their diſeaſe, and both deemed incurable: each thought the other would die ſoon, and openly declared his opinion, but neither ſeemed to imagine his own death to be near.

M. If they lived well, it was ſo far happy.

T. I mention it as a proof of the mercy of heaven in making us happy almoſt to the laſt hour. Every body ſhould endeavour to make the *preſent time* comfortable, yet always living mindful of the life to come, and not cheating themſelves with falſe hopes: it is a duty we owe to our own repoſe to divert every *uſeleſs* thought of *death*.

As to our fondneſs for life, how great is the indifference of ſome, who have the fulleſt enjoyment of this world, after having tried every means to fill up the meaſure of their deſires! The moſt fortunate find, that there muſt be ſomething more than it can furniſh, to equal the longings of their hearts after happineſs. We all wiſh to live long, with a view to the *enjoyment of life*; and yet as old age creeps on, we become diſqualified for ſuch enjoyments: and who can ſay he will live till to-morrow; or that he ſhall be more virtuous twenty years hence, than he is to-day? Time too often brings more guilt and more ſorrow; yet when it opens new lights to the ſoul, to direct our ſteps, as we approach to the verge of eternity,

What life is to a great part of mankind.

eternity, and reduces the paſſions to a ſtate of obedience to reaſon, then it is deſirable: but he who truſts that he ſhall live to be old, for the purpoſe of regulating his paſſions, without endeavouring to ſubdue them, thinks not how little merit he may have, if he ſucceeds; and may find that even old age hath many paſſions peculiar to itſelf.

M. Is it not then fooliſh, as well as preſumptuous, to defer this neceſſary work, in expectation of *long life!*

T. Weak and fooliſh indeed, to truſt one's whole fortune on a bottom, which hath wrecked ſo many millions! The only way, *Mary*, of making ſure of all the good effects of living *long*, is to live *well*; and to live *well*, humanly ſpeaking, *is* in our power; but to live *long*, it is very obvious, *is not* in our power.

As to *honour*, *wealth*, *renown*, and the *ambition* which captivates the *great world*, what are they but the mere whiſtling of a *name?* How ſhort a time deſtroys ſuch diſtinctions! I who am deſtined to an humble fortune, am now approaching to my end; and if it ſhould pleaſe heaven to afflict me with a ſtroke of the palſy, or an apoplectic fit; or if I was labouring with grievous pains in the gout, or the ſtone, though I ſhould become immediately poſſeſſed of an income of a *thouſand*, or if you pleaſe, *ten thouſand pounds* a year, what would it avail? What comfort ſhould I draw from it? How deſirable ſoever it might appear to thoſe who belong to me, it could have no charms in my eyes!

M. What is it then that makes the aged, and thoſe who muſt leave the ſtage of life very ſoon, covetous or ambitious?

T. Folly and dotage: it is want of ſenſe, or want of faith; it is the force of habit, and in both caſes, a miſapplication of the underſtanding. But ſtill thou art to obſerve, that there are many actions which the world judges of falſely, and imputes to motives of folly or impiety, though they are frequently the reſult of prudence, and flow from affection to *children*. The *great* may ſometimes have a view to the love of their country; when, to vulgar eyes, their conduct may ſeem as if they were actuated by a fooliſh or a vicious ſelf-love; for they may ſet but *little value* on ſuch

enjoyments, with reſpect to their own ſtate and condition, and yet indulge a very rational ſatisfaction in thinking that thoſe who they love moſt, will be the better for ſuch things: therefore be not raſh in thy concluſions: judge with candour.

How death may be conſidered.

M. I believe it is not ſo much for the love of life, as from the fear of *death*, that many are ſo unwilling to die.

T. True, *Mary*. *That ſomething after death*, which we muſt die to know, may be the cauſe of their uneaſineſs. We brand *death* with the odious name of *tyrant*, when we are really indebted to him for our freedom from the yoke of life, when it grows burthenſome. But if we conſider death merely as depriving us of breath, this falls very ſhort of the notion we ought to entertain of it. We ſhould take in the whole compaſs of this wonderful diſpenſation! By *one man*, *death* came into the world; by *another*, came the reſurrection of the dead. *Adam*, by his offence, brought *death* into the world; *Chriſt*, by his mediation, brought *life* and immortality to light, and theſe are promiſed to all, without exception, who are obedient to his laws. We are informed of nothing, with certainty, of the ſtate beyond the grave; except that rewards or puniſhments will be diſpenſed in it, for what we have done in this world. Theſe are objects of *faith*, becauſe we do not *ſee* them; but nothing can be more reaſonable to believe; and if we act under the influence of ſuch *belief*, we ſhall apply ourſelves diligently to avoid the *miſery* threatened, and to obtain the *happineſs* promiſed, in the ſame manner, and with the ſame *zeal* and *aſſiduity*, as if we were not obliged to paſs through the gates of death, to ſuffer the one or enjoy the other.

In the general view of death, it is paſſing over from *time* to *eternity*. To the virtuous, we are convinced that it opens the doors to a happy immortality; and though it be attended ſometimes with *pain* and *ſuffering*, this is recompence enough! The ſuffering ſhould be conſidered as abundantly compenſated by the *hope*; and where there is a manly ſenſe of religion, there can be little pain or ſenſibility on account

of

of death. Though the dread of death is an apprehenſion of ſuffering, yet it is a ſhame to be terrified with mere apprehenſion of evil, when we ſee many go ſo calmly off the ſtage of life. Think then only of the eſſential part, and pray to God for a *happy* death *(a)*.

M. I have heard that ſome people are ſo afraid of dying, that they would not even make their *will*; alledging, that wills are the fore-runners of death.

T. And perhaps they died the ſooner, from the frequent anxious recollection that they had not made it. Thoſe who ſo far neglect their duty, that they cannot bear the thoughts of death without pain, wear out the ſprings of life; when a calm reconciliation to death fills the mind with comfort, and gives ſuch a reliſh to the enjoyments of life, as ſerves to prolong it. Men are apt to terrify themſelves where there is no real cauſe of terror; and *fear death as children fear the dark*. Every one pretends to know what *life* is, and we certainly know that *death* is ſomething contrary to life; but we cannot preciſely tell what it is to die, any more than we can tell at what time of life, or under what circumſtances death will come to us. But this we are ſure of, that it is impoſſible, on any rational principle, to enjoy any conſiderable degree of happineſs, if we are afraid of our own thoughts; for in theſe only can we find true ſatisfaction and comfort; theſe alone can make us truly ſenſible of the bleſſings of life, or enable us to bear the evils to which it is ſubject. By calm and ſerious reflections upon death, we draw out its ſting, and obtain a noble ſuperiority over this world. This ſeems to be the ready way to acquire a reliſh of the enjoyments of life, beyond all other means that wealth or honour can provide.

Nature

(a) For a Happy Death.

O God, whoſe bleſſed Son was manifeſted, that he might triumph over death, deſtroy the works of the devil, and make men heirs of a bliſsful immortality; grant, I beſeech thee, that having this hope, I may be purified in body and in ſoul, and ſo conform my life to the precepts of thy goſpel, that finally I may calmly reſign my breath to thee, O Father of ſpirits, truſting in thy boundleſs mercy, through Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of life and Redeemer of the world! *Amen.*

Nature having paſſed ſentence on us all, as much as the judge on the *malefactor*, there is no room for *complaint*; and as we are ignorant of the hour of death, the greater the neceſſity of keeping ourſelves in a ſtate of preparation for it, and ready at the ſhorteſt ſummons.

Why we ſhould be reconciled to death.

If we conſider death, with regard to its influence on men's lives, we are much indebted to it for numberleſs advantages: it checks and controuls the ravagers of the earth, and the diſturbers of the peace of mankind: it warns us of the danger of *ſin*, by the numbers it cuts off in the career of vice; while the thoughts of it prevents a thouſand crimes, which otherwiſe would be committed. It reconciles us to the condition of human life, in the unnumbered calamities it is ſubject to, ſome of which I have already mentioned. Conſider alſo how it frees the *captive* from his chains, and dries up the *widow*'s tears; teaching the *humble* to ſubmit with reſignation; and thoſe who are tormented with diſeaſe and pain, to bear with patience That which *hope* aſſures them they ſhall ſoon be relieved from.

Why we ſhould be moderate in our expectations from life.

To learn how to think of death, we ſhould conſider what there is in *life* to make us fond of it. In this reſpect the humble in ſpirit, and the humble in condition, ſeem to have the feweſt temptations. But let any of us examine candidly, and we ſhall find how often we *over-rate* the good things of this world. Is it for the ſake of *riches* that we anxiouſly deſire life? Theſe often make themſelves wings, and often prove the more immediate cauſes of diſeaſe of body, and anguiſh of mind: they frequently create more bitter cares than we find even in poverty.—Is it for *honours?* Theſe fade at the frowns of princes, or at the capricious humour of the people. Happy for ſuch as you and I, evils of this kind cannot reach us!——Is it for the ſake of *beauty* that we wiſh to live? This falls not to the lot of many, and ſome rue the day it was given them; being rendered emphatically miſerable on this very account: and it is true, even to a proverb, that it is but as a flower which withers, and the faireſt lillies ſooneſt fade.—Is it *health* that enchanteth? This is a *bleſſing* indeed, but it is ſubject to change,

change, almoſt as the weather; and the ſtrength which attends it, always abates as life draws to its cloſe.

M. Theſe advantages are certainly great bleſſings, and appear very deſireable; but when we over-rate them, and ſet our hearts too much upon them, they become *evils*.

T. True, *Mary:* if we over-value them, they are, in the eye of religion and true wiſdom, equally objects of *vanity*. Innocency and a virtuous life are the things moſt worthy of our ſolicitude. Be virtuous, and thy days will wear away with pleaſure, and death will be to thee only as lying down to reſt, and falling into the arms of ſleep.

Reflections on life paſt.

Thou art going, my daughter, into a bad world, yet think not ſo badly of it but that thou mayſt be good, if thou wilt carefully remember and carry into practice the counſel which I have given thee. *My* life ſeems to have paſſed like a watch in the night; yet, compared to the great maſs of my fellow-creatures, it hath been long. Thou canſt now only wiſh to live long: I have had my feaſt of life already; but the longer I live, the more I feel my own faults, and diſcover other people's. Some *paſſion* or *opinion*; ſome conſcious folly or neglect; ſome anxious wiſh for the happineſs of the public, or the welfare of an individual, beyond my reach to accompliſh, has, in ſome meaſure, diſquieted my breaſt. I hardly flatter myſelf that I ſhould find uninterrupted reſt on this ſide the grave, were I to live *twenty years* longer. Nor do I believe this to be ſtrange or uncommon, or any proof that I am much worſe than other men. The longer I have lived, the more I have learnt; and above all, how *unreaſonable* it would be, to quarrel with others for being ſo much like myſelf.

M. This will be my caſe, when I know as much of the world as you do.

T. In the mean time, *Mary*, profit by my advice, and learn to be every day more wiſe and more virtuous; and never be weary of well-doing, in ſpite of the folly and ingratitude thou mayſt meet with in return.

M. I have no flattering hopes that I ſhall ever reach the perfection which my mind aſpires after; but I think it a happi-

happineſs to preſs forward for the prize; and rejoice in the hopes of obtaining it.

T. I believe no mortal ever did attain the degree of perfection which he imagined himſelf capable of; and this proves that the *ſoul* is not at home; it longs for the life to come, where that perfection may be found. All things here below are mixed and blended with *evil*; we muſt wait for *death*, the great inſtructor of mankind, before we ſhall know what is meant by true and unmixed happineſs.

M. But after all, my Father, it muſt be a *very ſerious* thing to die!

T. And is it not a ſerious thing alſo to *live?* We cannot ſeparate *death* from *life:* fooliſh people imagine, that *ſeriouſneſs* and *joy* are incompatible with each other: they think that enjoyment conſiſts only in *mirth* or *diſſipation*, which of all kinds of joy is the loweſt, and leaſt durable; and when attended by intemperance, it always leads to ſorrow.

M. But when *all things go well with us*, is it not natural to rejoice that we *live?*

T. Beyond diſpute; we owe it to the great giver of life, who accepts our joyful gratitude in payment of his favour: but it is no leſs true, that in the juſt eſtimate of life, *things cannot be well with us*, unleſs we conſider the tenure by which we hold life itſelf: and what is this, but to be ready to part with it when called upon by the great Lord and Proprietor of life?

A happy death, the reward of repentance and a good life.

M. You will pardon me, my dear Father, if I have uſed any expreſſion unworthy of a chriſtian. The apprehenſions which hung about me are now ſhaken off; your words fire me with courage and reſolution! Methinks I feel as if the arrows of death were taken out of my boſom, by the all-healing hand of the Son of God, and the wound cured by thoſe precious drops of blood which fell from his ſide!

T. Well, then, *baniſh thy fears*, and be at reſt: embrace the diſpenſation of the goſpel; put thy truſt in the propitiation made for the ſins of the world, and lead a ſober and a godly life; and then *death* will be to thee only a paſſage from

from this ſtate of trial and trouble, to a ſtate of *glory* and *happineſs:* for the only ſting of death is ſin, and the apprehenſion of puniſhment for ſin. If pain and ſickneſs ſhould invade thy bed, and draw their diſmal curtain round thee, open thine heart to God *(a)*; apply to him with ſincerity and confidence; and if thou ſhouldſt fall a prey to death in the bloom of youth, yet light will ſpring up to thee in darkneſs, and thou ſhalt be ſafe. If thou ſhouldſt live to a good old age, and drop like the ripened grain of corn, thou wilt have ſeen ſo many the more years, and beheld ſo much the more ſin and ſorrow, as well as virtue and joy. We naturally look forward to ſomething *which is to come*; our happineſs here depends on our *hopes*; and theſe riſe or fall, in proportion to the conſciouſneſs of our integrity, and the ſincerity of our deſire to pleaſe God. Let our rank or condition be what it will, the effect will conſtantly be the ſame.

M. I believe indeed that virtue is the only foundation of happineſs; and that as we decline in piety and goodneſs, ſo will our *hopes* decline, and our comforts vaniſh.

T. Being from thy heart convinced of theſe truths, ſtudy to cheriſh and increaſe thy hope of the divine favour, by keeping up a fervent devotional intercourſe with God, and ſeeking earneſtly the aſſiſtance of his grace: read the ſcriptures with attention, and treaſure up the divine truths which are there revealed; attend the table of the Lord, and there ſolemnly renew thy covenant with God; ſhew the happy influence of theſe ſacred exerciſes in greater degrees of purity and

(a) For Pardon of Sins in Sickneſs.

Hear me, O almighty and moſt merciful Father, and extend thy goodneſs to thy ſervant. Sanctify, I beſeech thee, all thy corrections to me, that the ſenſe of my *weakneſs* in my preſent condition, may add *ſtrength* to my *faith*, and ſerioufneſs to my repentance. Give me grace ſo to take this viſitation, that I may reſign myſelf entirely to thy will; and whenever my diſſolution comes, O remove me to the regions where ſickneſs, pain, and ſorrow cannot enter; that I may enjoy thy preſence in everlaſting glory. This I beg, through the merits of my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt.

and holineſs; in a word, attend to thy ſeveral duties with pleaſure: enjoy the beſſings of thy preſent ſtate with innocence: bear the afflictions of it with patience, and be humbly reconciled to the important change we muſt all undergo. Thus wilt thou riſe ſuperior to the fears of death; and thy ſpirit being framed to the enjoyment of the ſociety above, will rejoice in the ſummons which calls thee to their bleſſed manſions. *Mary!* if thou art wiſe, let it be the rule of thy life, to make up thy accounts every night. Conſider, at leaſt, what thou haſt *ſaid* and *done*; nor let thy thoughts go unchaſtiſed. Thus wilt thou be able to ſtate thy reckoning fairly; and "if thy ſins die before thee, thou wilt have "nothing to do when death comes, but to die." When we are in a right ſtate of mind, it ſignifies little whether we die by a ſlow or a quick death: if by a lingering diſorder, pray to God for reſignation *(a)*. Health is the moſt proper ſtate for repentance: Many a heedleſs creature has been ſuddenly hurried away, into the preſence of a long-forgotten and much-offended God. Be fully aſſured, my daughter, that the only ſafe way to eſcape the terrors of death, is to *live conſtantly prepared to die*; and not to ſuffer thyſelf to be laughed, or reaſoned out of *thy happineſs*.

It ſeems determined by Providence that you and I muſt part; let us therefore improve every hour that remaineth before

(a) Prayer in Sickneſs.

Moſt righteous God, in whoſe hands are the appointment of life and death, grant that I may perceive thy juſtice and mercy, and look up to thee for ſtrength to bear, and grace to profit by my ſickneſs. Let me conſider it as a ſcourge for my ſins, and a medicine to heal the diſeaſes of my ſoul. Grant, O Lord, it may anſwer theſe ends, that truſting in thy gracious promiſes, I may behave myſelf ſubmiſſively, patiently, and devoutly; and if it be thy pleaſure to reſtore me to health, let me conſtantly ſend up my heart in praiſe and gratitude to thee, and lead the reſidue of my days in thy ſervice, and to thy glory. But if it is thy will that this ſickneſs ſhould be unto death, forgive my manifold tranſgreſſions; and prepare my ſpirit, that I may ſtand accepted before thy throne. Receive me into thy favour, O Father eternal! Look down in mercy from thy throne, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, who died for the ſins of men, and roſe again for their redemption. *Amen.*

fore the day comes; and hear me, O my daughter, with attention!——Whether we live in ſorrow or in joy, in good fortune or in bad, *death*, ere long, muſt entirely divide us. Thou perchance mayſt go before thou thinkeſt of it: *I muſt go ſoon!* Let us both prepare for that journey, as the *laſt thing* which we ſhall have to do, before we enter on our ſtate of *immortality*. I need not tell thee, that even theſe tranſient minutes which I paſs with ſo much pleaſure in thy company, bring us ſo much the nearer to our end.

There is indeed a kind of ſeeming *flow in life*, ſo far as regards the renewal of health, but in fact it is a *real ebb*; ſince it is certain that every moment brings us nearer to that end, in which the laſt drop will ebb out, and the fountain of life be dried up. Conſider the goodneſs of God in giving life, and in offering happineſs to us: adore him with a grateful heart! Let *thy* hour, come when it may, "Be not againſt the pleaſure of the *Moſt High:* There is no inquiſition in the grave, whether thou haſt lived *ten*, or an *hundred*, or a *thouſand* years." And as none who are born of woman eſcape, live prepared for *thy turn*, to be gathered to the *thouſands of millions* who are gone before thee. Whether thou ſhalt die young, or live to old age, remember, "that honourable age is not that which ſtandeth in length of time, nor that which is meaſured by number of years, but *wiſdom* is grey hair unto men, and an unſpotted life is old age." The wiſdom here meant will teach thee to remember thy Creator in theſe days of thy youth, and to apply thy heart ſo diligently to pleaſe Him, that he may receive thee into everlaſting joy.

Such proviſion being made, can we do leſs than rejoice even in death? But, *Mary*, it is an additional motive to a *chriſtian*'s joy, that he has not a nominal or *viſionary* pretenſion, but a *ſubſtantial* title to everlaſting happineſs, founded on the promiſes of the God of truth. Be then careful ſo to conduct thyſelf, that thou mayſt not be diſinherited for diſobedience! And I charge thee to remember, whilſt memory holds its office in thy mind, that this great truth is confirmed by no leſs a perſon than the Son of God. Thy life cannot be wretched, whilſt thou remaineſt in the practice of

virtue; nor wilt thou conſider *death* but as the means of conveyance to a ſtate of boundleſs happineſs.

Learn from ſuch conſiderations to rejoice: conſider how highly valuable thou art to thyſelf: and be watchful of the treaſure thou haſt in the poſſeſſion of *virtue*. We are reminded in the ſcriptures, that through *fear*, men are held in *bondage*. There is nothing ſo baſe, which has not been done to *ſave life*; though it may have been the cauſe of *loſing it* On the contrary, nothing is ſo *generous* as the being ſuperior to the *fear* of death; for *fear* enſlaves the mind, and makes our days paſs in a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to this paſſion, for a ſcanty portion of temporal felicity: but when the mind is poſſeſſed by a *conſcious rectitude of will* to ſerve God, this alleviates the fear, if it does not totally *remove* it; and as we advance in our progreſs towards perfection, by degrees it will deprive death of thoſe attributes, which firſt gave occaſion to his being called *the king of terrors*. This denomination is peculiarly proper, when applied to the ſtate of thoſe, to whom the fear of death is terrible; for fear muſt neceſſarily have its object; and what can this be with reſpect to the grave, but the apprehenſions of *puniſhment?* If we are conſcious that we live *unfit to die*, it is not wonderful we ſhould fear, nor that fear ſhould hold us in *bondage*.

The fear of death inſlaves the mind.

M. It ſeems to be a double calamity to be held captive to ſin; and to be further enſlaved by the fear of puniſhment for ſuch ſin.

T. Virtue and *pleaſure* go together: and *pain* generally follows cloſe at the heels of *vice*. To the virtuous, the change from life to death, is from bad to good, or from worſe to better; and if we give our reaſon fair play, there can be no room to doubt of a happy deciſion in our favour. Therefore, the whole reſts on this iſſue; to cultivate our *reaſon*; to ſtrengthen our *faith*; and to endeavour to keep a conſcience as void of offence towards God and man, as our frailties will admit of; neither *deſponding*, becauſe we are *not perfect*; nor becoming *preſumptuous* by any falſe conſtruction of the ſcriptures, or partiality to our favourite inclinations. Conſcience, under the guidance of the word of God,

God, muſt ſtill be the rule of life. My prayer both for thee and myſelf, is

O almighty Father and ſovereign Protector of my life! Thou, in whom all the glories of immortality center! grant that I may live the remainder of my days in thy fear, and to thy glory; and at length die the death of the righteous, that *my* laſt end may be like *his*. Further I implore thy favour and mercy to this my child, the choiceſt object thou haſt been pleaſed to give me: grant that ſhe may form her life and manners on this great principle, that virtue is the ſupreme good of mortals here below, in all the ſeveral ſtations which thou haſt aſſigned them, that in thy good time ſhe may alſo be received into thy glory! This petition I offer at thy throne, O God, in the name, and through the mediation of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, who died upon the croſs, that we might live for ever!

SUNDAY.

CONVERSATION X.

On Immortality.

The familiar notion of our own diſſolution.

T. I Hope, *Mary*, that nothing which I ſaid laſt night terrify'd thee.

M. Nothing, my Father: I feel myſelf healthy and ſtrong; and I rejoice in the bleſſing: yet I am not the leſs ſenſible that I am ſubject to ſickneſs and death. I paſs through our *church-yard*, you know, every day of my life; and I walk over the dead bodies of our late friends and neighbours, as if they were common earth, without any impreſſion of horror or fear; but it often occurs to me that ere long, my body will be depoſited in the ſame ſpot, and be trodden upon as familiarly by others.

Introduction of the thought of immortality.

T. Does not this thought carry thy mind beyond the grave, and lead thee to reflections on *immortality?*

M. Yes, my Father; and glad I am to find myſelf capable of meditating upon it with hope and joy; and by ſuch reflections, I truſt I ſhall improve in the love and in the *practice* of virtue?

Diſtinction of the body and the ſoul.

T. This will naturally ariſe from a habit of diſtinguiſhing between the *body* and the *ſoul*; for thus the true value and intereſt of both are diſcovered: I wiſh thou wouldſt obſerve this rule, in all the various concerns of thy life, and make enquiry at the door of thine own heart, how far the intereſt of thy ſoul may be affected by it.

M. This

M. This is a reaſonable enquiry; though perhaps not always made as it ſhould be.

T. Thoſe who moſt conſult the gratifications of their *ſenſes*, we may ſuppoſe are the leaſt attentive to the welfare of their *ſouls*; and the moſt indifferent about the ſafety of other people. It is not but that every one makes a diſtinction, but it does not ſink deep.

M. I ſuppoſe that all people have ſome conſideration for their ſouls. Even in common diſcourſe I have heard it ſaid, "*I* intend to have *my body* diſpoſed of, that is, buried in ſuch or ſuch a manner." I preſume they ſpeak in the character of the ſoul.

T. This is a mode of ſpeaking, but they certainly mean as thou haſt obſerved, and think of the body as a mere vehicle, or the inferior part of themſelves: the misfortune is, that in *practice* they ſhew too much attention to it, and too little to their immortal part. Thy obſervation brings to my mind, the words of a certain *poor cottager*, who being tormented with the ſtone, ſaid in the honeſt ſimplicity of his heart, "I wiſh I could once get *this breath of mine out of my body*, I would take care it ſhould never get in again."

M. Did not this ſhew ſome degree of impatience which miſbecame him?

T. I do not pretend to comment on the expreſſion, but mention the fact to ſhew thee, how ſtrongly he diſtinguiſhed between his *ſoul* and his *body*, conſidering the ſoul as the moving and directing principle.

M. Does not the common diſtinction of *virtue* and *vice* ſuppoſe a perſuaſion of the immortality of the ſoul?

T. I think it clearly implies ſuch a belief; and yet we muſt not aſk our neighbours *abruptly* if they believe it; for tho' the truth is ſo very evident that they never had any doubt about it, yet till we come to a true reliſh of virtue and chriſtian piety, we are not generally ſo *habitually thoughtful* as to anſwer the queſtion at once, clearly and *from the heart*; not, I ſay, from any doubt about the thing, but from a diſuſe of talking of it. The belief of the immortality of the ſoul reduced to practice, ſometimes called a *practical belief*, is the corner-ſtone on which all virtue is built. It is that, without

which,

which, the whole fabrick of life totters from its foundation: without it, life itſelf is a dream, ſo ſoon paſſeth it away and we are gone. We may, as an ideot tells his tale, bluſter and make a noiſe; but life, without immortality, ſignifies *nothing!*

Reaſons drawn from common life for the immortality of the ſoul.

Thou wilt probably ſee me ſoon a lump of inanimate clay, when all my thoughts, with reſpect to this world, ſhall periſh: but doſt thou imagine, *Mary*, I ſhall periſh totally? Doſt thou believe I ſhall die, and become nothing more than what we ſuppoſe of a dog? Is it *natural*, I ſay, or *reaſonable* to think, that after having laboured to curb my paſſions, to improve my heart, and to worſhip the God of my life, I ſhall ſink into death, and the whole of me become a clod, to be broken with a ſpade or plowſhare? Doſt thou apprehend that all the anxious longings of my heart after virtue, and all my endeavours to inſpire thy breaſt with glorious thoughts of religion, will have no better end than if I had abandoned myſelf to all manner of wickedneſs; and paid no attention to thy ſubſtantial welfare?

M. O, my Father, this can never *be*; reaſon and nature revolt againſt ſo monſtrous a ſuppoſition!

T. Thou ſeeſt that I have a *body*; and thou art as well aſſured that I have a *mind:* though thou canſt not ſee my mind, except in my actions: I am as well perſuaded that my mind has a power which acts; but to what end ſhould it have the faculties it really has, if it was not to ſurvive the body? It is ſurely ſomething ſo different in nature, and acts ſo diſtinct from my body; that if I had no other reaſon for the opinion, I ſhould think that it could not be ſubject to undergo the ſame change as my body. The remembrance it hath of things paſt, and the expectation of things to come; the love of truth and virtue, which are ſo diſtinct from every thing like the body; and the deſire of relieving the troubles of creatures, like myſelf, in the various chances of their lives, wherein their bodies are not concerned; and above all, its natural longings after happineſs, not attainable in this earthly ſtate, are ſo many confirmations that it is *immortal!* It muſt have derived its exiſtence from a power

ſo great, perfect, and boundleſs, that no other being than God can be its author.

M. I who have ſeen ſo much leſs of the world, feel all that you have ſaid of yourſelf: and if there are any of opinion that there will be an end of the ſoul when death comes, we may fairly aſk what they can poſſibly gain by ſuch a notion; and if they have read the ſcriptures, in which *immortality* is brought to light?

T. Thoſe who do not believe the immortality of the ſoul, if any ſuch there are, muſt be extremely weak, or extremely wicked: They muſt have eſtranged their ſoul from their Maker, even to wiſh there was no God. Such an opinion, might, perhaps, afford them ſome ſmall occaſional relief, by diſpelling their terrors, but theſe would return with double force, and gnaw their vitals.

M. Alas! how miſerable is the ſtate of a ſinner, whoſe beſt hope is, that he ſhall fall into *nothing*.

T. The very poſſibility of a judgment to come, to ſuch perſons, muſt occaſion the anguiſh of a troubled doubting mind; whereas, in believing that there is a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death, and acting well, we are ſo far ſafe, that no harm can happen to us on this account. The moſt abandoned perſon never pretended to any *certainty* that there is no ſuch ſtate, and conſequently his mind muſt be in doubt; and *that* doubt in the day of danger, generally fixes in the belief of ſuch ſtate, or the aſſurance that there are rewards and puniſhments after death.

M. How glad I am of knowing what God hath declared in the holy ſcriptures, concerning the *immortality* of the ſoul!

T. Keep thine eye, with unremitting conſtancy, on the judgment to come, that thou mayſt govern thy life by the rules of religion which thou haſt learned.

M. O my Father, what a miſerable ſtate is his, who, in a religious ſenſe, is blind, or not able to look backward without *ſhame*, or forward without *terror!*

T. Think thou of ſuch things as will give thee comfort and peace in the laſt extremity, for that extremity will *certainly* come.

M. The more I think of theſe great truths, the more joyful is my heart! I appear to myſelf ſurrounded by a heavenly guard: I feel as if my ſoul, already looſed from the ſhackles of mortality, were ſmiling over my grave, and taking leave of its once-beloved companion, in confidence of being happy in another ſtate.

T. My dear *Mary*, I know thou art ſincere: Give me thy hand, as a pledge of the truth of what thou haſt ſaid. It was ſuch a thought as this, which made the apoſtle cry out, "O *death* where is thy ſting! O *grave* where is thy victory!"——How much better is it to cheriſh ſuch thoughts as theſe, than to mourn over the ſad remains of mortality, impriſoned in the dark manſions of the grave!

M. I am convinced beyond all doubt, that when my ſoul ſhall leave my body, it will be alive ſomehow, and ſomewhere, in a ſtate of *happineſs*, or in a ſtate of *miſery*. My *conſcience* tells me there is ſo vaſt a difference between *virtue* and *vice*, as theſe relate to me, who am a *rational* and *accountable* creature, that my ſoul can never be deſtroyed by death.

T. O, my daughter, I now *find* that thou haſt read the *New Teſtament* to a good purpoſe, for therein are the words of *eternal life*; and what is *eternal life* but an immortality of happineſs; or what *eternal death*, but everlaſting miſery?

Reſurrection of the body.

That there will be a reſurrection of the body, of the *juſt* and the *unjuſt*, no *chriſtian* can doubt; and let us thank heaven that *we* are *chriſtians!* What changes the body may paſs through, we cannot tell: Being returned into the boſom of the earth, it will moulder into duſt, from which it was firſt formed; and in proceſs of time, be diſperſed into different parts. If it is accidentally conſumed by fire, it will go off, and mix for the moſt part with the *air:* if it remains upon the ſurface of the earth, it will be ſoon corrupted and diſſolved, and both earth and air receive their proper portion of the matter of which it was compoſed. If it ſhould have a *watery* grave, it will become the prey of fiſhes, or mix with that element; and under ſuch a change, the parts of which it was compoſed, can no more be diſtinguiſhed by *us mortals*; but *that* Almighty power, which

which firſt created the earth and the air, the fire and the water, will recall the ſcattered atoms which belonged to each individual, and re-unite the body and the ſoul. Whatever hath once exiſted, as I have often heard my maſter ſay, will continue to exiſt; there cannot be any annihilation or reduction of it to *nothing*. And when the laſt trumpet ſhall ſound, then, by the reſiſtleſs command of the great Lord of all, the earth and ſea, and every part of nature's vaſt domain, will *give up their thouſands of millions of human kind!* And the body, which now clogs the ſoul, and checks its aſpiring powers, becoming *glorified* and *incorruptible*, will be again united to the ſoul, as a fit companion for it, in all its ſublime and ſpiritual entertainments, in a ſtate which ſhall have no end! Thou knoweſt, that as the *good* will riſe, to *enjoy* everlaſting *pleaſure*; the *bad* will riſe to ſuffer everlaſting *pain!* Whatever our condition on earth may be, what an *idea* does the word *everlaſting* now convey to the mind of mortals! How *pleaſing* is the thought to the righteous, how *dreadful* to the wicked!——But, my child!——

M. Be not ſurprized, my Father, if my countenance changes at your words: they penetrate my inmoſt thoughts: yet do not think that my *terror* conquers my *hope*. I am reſolved to perſevere in the paths of virtue, whatever difficulties ſhall ſtand in my way.

The wonderful event of the reſurrection of the body, compared to preſent objects.

T. Heaven has framed us all for ſuch impreſſions, and unhappy it is when the mind is callous! The tranſlation out of this life into another, and the particular circumſtances of the *future* ſtate, are wonderful! That there is ſuch a ſtate, is clearly laid open by the *revelation* which is made known to us. We muſt either impiouſly turn a deaf ear to the oracles of God, as contained in our Bible, or be ſincere in our obedience to his word. Theſe indeed are ſubjects of wonder and aſtoniſhment! How are we loſt in the contemplation of them!—All thy works, O God, are wonderful!—Art not thou, my daughter, a mighty wonder to thyſelf? How cameſt thou into being? Where wert thou but eighteen years ago? Could any mortal then ſee thy frame, or form any notion of thy exiſtence? Where

were thy *thoughts*, which now aſcend to heaven? Thou wert produced as the reſt of our ſpecies, in the amazing courſe and order of nature; but who is the mighty Lord and omnipotent Governor of nature? Who originally gave her laws? Who ſtill keeps her in her courſe, and continually ſupports her powers? Who but That God, at whoſe command ſhe firſt ſtarted into being at the creation; and at whoſe command ſhe will as certainly one day drop in hoary age, and come to an end.

General belief of immortality.

M. The contemplation of the immortal God, and the immortality of the ſoul of man, are indeed wonderfully great, and glorioufly joyful!—Do all the nations of the earth believe in the immortality of the ſoul, and the reſurrection of the body?

T. We were all in the dark till it was revealed to us: Thou remembereſt what the ſcriptures mention, upon the preaching of a *Saviour*, by *John the Baptiſt*; how the Jews ran out to him in crowds, to enquire *what they ſhould do to be ſaved*; and ſome of the *Roman ſoldiers* alſo went and aſked him the ſame queſtion. His anſwer was, *Do violence to no man, neither accuſe any falſely, and be content with your wages.* Theſe ſoldiers were *heathens*; but upon the appearance of ſo extraordinary a perſon as *John*, and ſoon after him of *Chriſt* himſelf, it is eaſy to imagine that they were very inquiſitive. They believed that ſuch perſons might inform them of ſomething relating to happineſs after death, and therefore aſked this remarkable queſtion, ſo very intereſting to all the world. Thoſe who received *Chriſt* in his true character as the *Meſſiah*, were convinced of the truth of the great doctrines of the immortality of the ſoul, the reſurrection of the body, and a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death. The heathen world had ſome notion and belief that the ſoul was *immortal*, and would live in ſpite of the grave; and if it lived, that it muſt enjoy *happineſs*, or ſuffer *miſery* in that ſtate of life: but they had no notice in relation to a *reſurrection* of the body; nor had been taught before the coming of Chriſt, with any degree of certainty, that the *ſoul* is immortal.

M. But if I remember right, ſome of the *Jews* did not then believe

believe in the *reſurrection of the body*, nor in the exiſtence of angels or ſpirits.—

T. True: witneſs the *Sadducees*; but they were ridiculed even by the common people, for their diſbelief. Thou knoweſt that the belief of the immortality of the ſoul, and the reſurrection of the body, are founded on the ſame authority.—In the ordinary operations of nature, it is well worth obſerving, that the grain which is ſown, corrupts and lies rotting in the earth; and yet in due time it revives, and brings forth fruit. It may be thus in ſome meaſure with the *body*. There are many of the works of God; which, though we ſee them with our eyes, we cannot ſufficiently explain: and therefore it becomes us to reſt entirely upon his *word* concerning them, and to believe what he has revealed in the ſcriptures, where we have the moſt undoubted evidence that Chriſt himſelf *aroſe* from the dead, and that he *raiſed* the dead. The miracles which he did, gave proof of the *will* of the Almighty, as well as of his *power*. We *ſee* that the body returns to duſt, of which it was made; and we have the utmoſt reaſon and moſt ſubſtantial proof for believing, that the ſoul returns to God who gave it.

M. The ſoul being the principle and mover of all our thoughts, words, and actions, muſt ſtand a trial at the laſt tribunal: the ſcriptures, I know, inform us that it will be united to the body, which will be changed, and rendered incorruptible.

T. Thou mayſt obſerve, *Mary*, that the whole man, ſoul and body, undergoes the ſtate of trial or probation here, and is concerned in the good or evil works committed in this ſtate; therefore it is reaſonable to believe the whole man will appear, and be rewarded or puniſhed, according to the works done in the body.

M. The conſideration of ſuch mighty wonders ſhould humble us to the duſt, and teach us to throw ourſelves at the feet of the throne of God; and while we deplore our *own* unworthineſs, rejoice in *his* perfections!

T. As to the differences which moſt diſtinguiſh knowledge and ignorance, what is it the proudeſt of the children of Adam know? They know not how the *body* and *ſoul* act

on

on each other: They know not how we riſe from our chair: We all know that we *can* riſe, but how, the wiſeſt cannot tell.—If *theſe* are ſecrets, what can we boaſt of in our *preſent ſtate?*

When the happineſs of another ſtate begins.

M. Have we no authority, my Father, for the exact time *when* our happineſs or miſery will *begin?*

T. None that I know of, except what relates to the day of judgment. For my own part, *Mary*, I believe it may be juſt the ſame in regard to us, whether it happens on the day of our death, or ten thouſand years after: if we are not ſenſible of the difference of the time, it is the ſame. If, for inſtance, I fall into a profound ſleep at eleven o'clock at night, and remain ſo till ſix the next morning, theſe *ſeven* hours are not to me as one minute.

M. Suppoſing your notion to be juſt, how ſhould it affect us?

T. If we are in our ſenſes, we ſhall behave ourſelves as if the day of our death would be *a day* of *happineſs* or miſery. It is moſt likely it will be ſo: our Saviour told the penitent who died with him, *To-day ſhalt thou be with me in paradiſe.* What is meant by this we know not; but *we are in the higheſt degree aſſured that our lot is caſt*, and that *there is no repentance in the grave.* Let the thought of *immortality* always give thee pleaſure: I do not mean that the mind can be always fixed on ſo great an object, but that in general we muſt live with due attention to it, for this is our glory and common happineſs; it is That which the world cannot give, nor take away.

The dignity and importance of the ſoul.

When we arrive at ſuch a degree of improvement, and ſuch a knowledge of ourſelves, as to view both worlds with a peaceful and courageous mind, in a well-grounded confidence in the mercies of God, then with equal confidence we may hope to be happy. There cannot be a more pleaſing, or *improving exerciſe* to the human mind, than to be frequently *reviewing* its own privileges and endowments: nor a more effectual means to awaken in us an ambition raiſed above *low objects* and *little purſuits*, than to value ourſelves as heirs

of

of *eternity!* Thoſe who have no generous and worthy thoughts of themſelves, as *immortal* beings, cannot look forward with joy, or march through life with ſatisfaction. If we naturally ſhudder at the thought of falling into *nothing*, the dread of puniſhment is yet more terrible: but worthy thoughts produce worthy actions; and our hopes of happineſs increaſe with the practice of virtue.

M. Alas, my Father, ſo many objects of ſenſe play before our eyes, I fear they often divert the thoughts of the *heart* from the intereſt of the *ſoul.*

T. As reaſonable creatures, my daughter, we muſt act *reaſonably*, or our hearts can never be at reſt. Thoſe who fix their minds on the glorious paths which lead to heaven, will walk in them.

The neceſſity of attention to the ſoul.

M. If we acquire right habits, I preſume our views of immortal bliſs will grow familiar; and all of us muſt be convinced that we ſhall act a very *fooliſh*, as well as a *wicked* part, if we do not conſult our own eternal intereſt.

Pleaſure, the companion of hope.

T. The pleaſure of a rational creature being the object we purſue, there cannot be a more *pleaſing* conſideration than this, that in the ordinary courſe of virtue, the ſoul goes on from one degree of ſtrength to another, till the Almighty, in his good time, calls us to partake of the glory, which he intends ſhall be the reward of it.—And *time*, which preys on the body, and ſhatters this tenement of the ſoul, gives us experience. The more thou examineſt thine *heart*, the leſs deceitful it will be; yet when thou doſt examine it, be not *diſcouraged* at its imperfections: every ſore of the mind, like thoſe of the body, may be cured by time, and made ſound again. Compaſſion is due to ourſelves; and in all our contemplations which regard the ſoul, a ſeverity of *ſelf-chaſtiſement*, beyond the bounds which *reaſon* warrants, and our *truſt* in God demands, is rather the effect of a ſuperſtitious mind, or a diſordered brain, than the genuine produce of true religion. I have told thee, that God accepts our gratitude for *his* bounties, as the incenſe of *our* praiſe; and encourages us to be *joyful* in our expectations of immortal happineſs: To be

ſorrowful as men without hope, is expreſsly forbidden. Hope baniſhes melancholy and fear; and as the ſun darting from a cloud, diſpels the gloomy darkneſs, it makes the thoughts of immortality gladſome as the radiant morn, when we behold yon hills and vallies renewed in their verdant livery, and ſmiling in plenty! When the mind is thus elevated with joy, death ſeems to drop his dart; and rather to lead us to heaven in ſmiles of friendſhip and benignity, than to ſupport his character as the king of terrors.

M. Good humour muſt be as agreeable to piety, as attention to our immortal ſtate, to true wiſdom.

T. Thou art moſt certainly in the right; ſince nothing can be more injurious to the cauſe of religion, than a fond opinion, that becauſe this is ſerious and awful, therefore it muſt be ſad and gloomy. The heart may triumph in joy, without the noiſe of feſtivity. So far from melancholy being the characteriſtic of goodneſs, *virtue* itſelf implies an agreeable and pleaſing quality. In all caſes we ought to recollect our faults, and not to be at reſt till we correct them: yet ſtill viewing ourſelves in That light, in which it is moſt probable we ſhall benefit; drawing this certain concluſion, that the next evil to *deſpairing* of the mercies of God, is to *diſtruſt* his goodneſs.

M. O my Father, I remember the advice of our great Lord and Maſter, when he comforted his diſciples; for when they were moſt terrified with apprehenſions of evil from a wicked generation, he bid them be of good cheer, for that *He* had conquered *the world.*

T. It is very true; and this is a moſt diſtinguiſhed paſſage: I hope thou alſo wilt follow his example, and try to conquer the world, that it may not conquer thee.

M. But we cannot be always faultleſs.

T. No: but the more regular our lives are, the more the beauty of virtue will appear. It is the order and uniformity of our behaviour which diſplays her native charms, and gives her ſuch attractive ſmiles: it is this which pours into the ſoul the precious balm of hope: it is this which relieves the natural longings of the heart, and gives every bleſſing a quick reliſh, whilſt the pleaſure of an upright mind

mind affords the moſt convincing proof, that virtue rewards herſelf in this world, as well as promiſes happineſs in the next. Obſerve this rule, and if evil comes, thou wilt be ready in finding a remedy for it. Virtue lightens the load of our misfortunes: it will make thee feel thy ſubmiſſion to the will of God in the moſt ſenſible manner: thou wilt even ſmile at grief as a miniſter of *good* to thee; and by turning every event of life to advantage, practically learn how to make a *virtue* of *neceſſity*. But remember, my daughter, that this can be learnt only by the *trial*; and do not diſtruſt thy aged Father, who is communicating to thee the effects of his experience.

M. I am convinced, from my heart, of your goodneſs to me; and I know that this is not matter of *opinion* or *fancy*, but founded on the everlaſting rock of confidence in God!

The exalted pleaſure and advantage of thinking of immortality.

T. It is this which has conſtantly ſupported me under all the difficulties and troubles of my life, and now enables me to look forward with the hopes of better things after death. It is this which proves, to what an exalted heighth the chriſtian virtue lifts immortal man! Mighty things are ſpoken of among the opulent and learned: but where ſhall we ſeek for ſuch glorious motives to action, as thoſe which *chriſtianity* inſpires? Thou wilt hear much talk of *honour!* This is the idol of the *great*; and when it means honeſty, it is a glorious thing; but it oftentimes ſignifies nothing more than a compound of infidelity and diſobedience towards God; pride and vanity towards the world, and fear of the reproach of men: and when it hath any mixture of virtue, it falls very far ſhort of that unreſerved obedience to which a ſubſtantial immortality of glory is promiſed. Men cheat themſelves into falſe notions of things: nothing can exalt them ſo much as the conſideration of the happineſs of a life to come! Nothing is ſo noble; nothing ſo enlarged and delightful as this: all the glories of the world fall down before it!

M. Such hopes have ſurely all the advantage you aſcribe to them, and ſtill greater beyond our comprehenſion. But if they were not ſo highly pleaſing, yet the *mortality* we ſo naturally dread, appearing ſo continually before our doors

in our chambers, and in our fields, one would imagine we ſhould fly to the thought of *immortality*, as our only relief, whilſt it is the only ſafeguard of a virtuous life.

Whence indifference to the ſoul ariſes.

T. Well haſt thou *ſpoken*, my daughter; and I hope *thou* wilt *act* as well; thoſe who do not indulge ſuch conſiderations whilſt they are young, ſeldom attend much to them in more advanced years!

M. Not attend to them!——At ſome time or other they *muſt* attend, or retire very ill prepared to give up their account.

T. Well, *Mary*, if thou attendeſt to them, thou wilt enjoy a glorious entertainment, to which common mortals are ſtrangers.

M. But how comes it, that many who dwell in the moſt tedious manner on the infirmities of the body, talk ſo little on the *immortality* of the ſoul?

T. Doſt thou not perceive that it is the *faſhion* to talk of our health, and that long life is ſuppoſed to depend on it: but it is *not the faſhion* to talk of the ſoul; for this, on the contrary, ſuppoſes that *death* is the ſubject *of our meditations.*

M. Muſt every thing be reduced to the ſtandard of *faſhion?*

T. I ſuppoſe the *cuſtoms* of all countries determine the ordinary courſe of converſation. But this is not the greateſt evil; for many, I fear, whilſt they are in *company*, faintly acknowledge their belief of the immortality of the ſoul; and in *ſecret*, wiſh they *did not believe* it; from *acting* as if it were *not* ſo, they grow *practically* doubtful, whether it be ſo or not.

M. Good God! Is it poſſible that there ſhould be any who do not eagerly embrace the belief of *immortality?*

T. Alas, my daughter, thy queſtion ſtrikes me to the heart: for though I am willing to hope there is more religion in the world than we ſee, yet I obſerve, even among thoſe whom I eſteem my *friends*, as well as my familiar acquaintance, how little the *immortality* of the ſoul, which is the great object of religion, *appears* to be the object of their reflection; and this is the more unaccountable when one con-

conſiders how ſmall a part of this world's goods comes to the ſhare of many of *them*.

M. What can be the meaning of this?

T. Example tramples on *precept*; and we ſuffer ourſelves to be guided by our ſenſes. Thus men are apt to abuſe the indulgence of Providence, and become too high in their own conceit, to bend to the humble duties of chriſtian piety. The *great*, who ſhould take the lead in *good example*, are frequently ſo very deficient, as to ſtand in need of guides themſelves: They do not, in general, form their manners on a plan to receive deep impreſſions of their own *immortality*. We all acknowledge the belief of an exiſtence after death, and hope it will be happy; but I ſay we do not generally live ſufficiently attentive to the conditions of the happineſs expected.

M. Has this been the caſe at all times, and in all countries?

T. The mind is more cultivated, and produces better fruit at ſome periods than at others: whether things be now comparatively better or worſe than they were, let you and I make it our great object to *look at home:* And ſince the *knowledge of ourſelves* is ſo much more valuable than our opinion of other people, which may happen to be right or wrong, let us examine our own hearts, rather than ſcrutinize the conduct of others. The *wiſe* ponder in their thoughts what they believe to be *true*; and the *fooliſh* what they would have to *be ſo*. The *wiſe* look for that which will afford them comfort: the *fooliſh* often adopt ſuch notions as diſtract them with *fears* and *doubts:* The *wiſe* caſt their eyes forward into futurity, and conſider what will be their condition millions of ages hence, as well as what it now is; but the *fooliſh* think of the preſent moment only.

M. How can the true ſpirit of *chriſtianity* be revived, unleſs we meditate on the happy immortality which it promiſes?

T. True, my daughter; but we muſt take things as we find them; and wiſdom and folly are often blended in the ſame character. The beſt advice I can give thee, for the proſperity of the *goſpel*, as well as the welfare of thy *ſoul*, is

as I have told thee on other occaſions, to take all fit opportunities of converſing with thine own heart; making the *ſcriptures* thy rule; and thy *conſcience* thy judge; and both will unite their force to applaud, or to condemn thee, according to thy works.

M. This is what I mean to do; and for this I pray, that I may riſe to glory everlaſting *(a)*, ſtill charitably attentive to the immortal happineſs of others *(b)*.

General view of immortality.

T. As the great object of our ſpiritual nature is the *immortality* of the ſoul, let us, while we mind our worldly buſineſs as we ought, hold this neareſt to our heart. There is nothing we more naturally love, or are more ready to die for, than *truth*; nor are any truths of ſuch importance as the being of a God, and the immortality of the ſoul of man. In the great view of theſe ſublime and heavenly doctrines, it ſeems neceſſary to conſider *Adam*, as the great patriarch of the temporal and mortal condition of man; and *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the mighty Prophet, Law-giver, and Judge of our eternal and immortal ſtate; for whoſe ſecond coming we muſt prepare ourſelves. There-

(a) For a Happy Reſurrection.

Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, I implore thy grace, that I may caſt away the works of darkneſs, and direct my paths through this mortal life, with ſuch *humility* and *fear*, that when *Chriſt* who viſited mankind, in the moſt humble condition, ſhall return in tremendous glory, I may be found acceptable in his ſight, who liveth and reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, now and for ever! *Amen.*

(b) Againſt Careleſſneſs and Indifference, with reſpect to the Sins of others.

Father of mercies, and Lord of my life, whoſe beloved Son, when manifeſted in human nature, took all occaſions to relieve the ſpiritual wants and neceſſities of men, give me grace, I beſeech thee, to yield ſuch a zealous and chearful obedience to the gracious terms of thy goſpel, that by reforming my own life, I may both by *precept* and *example* influence the conduct of others; and become a happy inſtrument of thy providence, to render them conſtant in their duty to thee. Grant this, O God of heaven, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, the mighty friend and Saviour of the world! *Amen.*

Therefore, be wiſe, O my daughter, and make it the buſineſs of thy life to ſecure a happy event on that day, in which he will judge the world Do this, not only to avoid the terrible puniſhment which is threatened to the *evil* doer, but that thou mayſt receive the vaſt reward which is promiſed to the *good*. Thou haſt not forgotten the *learned Biſhop*'s repreſentation of *heaven* and *hell (a)*.

Such are the glorious contemplations of *immortality*, that the moſt unlettered villager, whoſe heart is deeply affected and his hopes exalted by the proſpect of it, may look down on this world, and learn to rejoice *with great joy*, even in the ſweat of his brows: this will make him *humble* in heart, *noble* in ſentiment, and *generous* even to the contempt of death: It is this which will render him lovely to others, who *diſcern* his goodneſs, and happy in himſelf who *feels* it. The world can give him nothing, compared to his *hopes*, nor take from him any thing that will deſtroy his peace. Chearful and courageous in his poverty, he truſts in the care of heaven: contemplating the riches of the goodneſs of his Father and his God!

End and conſummation of all.

The *greateſt* of the children of men are as *nothing*; and the reaſon which the *Royal Pſalmiſt* aſſigns for this, hath a peculiar beauty and ſimplicity. "Our time," ſays he, "paſſeth away like a ſhadow." Even the ſtars will one day fade away, and the bright luminary of the heavens will be extinguiſhed. Then ſhall we enter into the full enjoyment of our *immortal inheritance*, and *behold* thoſe glories which we can now only *meditate* upon.

M. What is the world, which we muſt leave in ſo ſhort a ſpace as the ordinary length of man's life? What can the whole world be worth, compared to an unſpotted faith, and the truth of a godly mind, fixed and unmoved in the cauſe of virtue?

T. What millions of individuals people this earth! Every one, conſidered properly, is of vaſt conſequence to himſelf, how little ſoever he may appear to others: But what hath been the fate of *whole nations*, with regard *to this world?*

(a) Dr. Sherlock, Page 126.

world? Where are the ancient people, the *Jews*, who made ſo great a figure in their time, as the ſacred hiſtory informs us? What variety of national puniſhments did their ſins occaſion, till they were cut off from the earth as a people!——Where are the mighty empires of the *Aſſyrians*, the *Babylonians*, the *Egyptians!*—Where are the *Romans*, who were maſters of the *Jews*, when, under their ruler *Pontius Pilate*, the Lord of life was put to death upon the croſs!—Thoſe mighty ſtates are wiped off the face of the earth! And what will be the fate of the *earth* itſelf? Thou, my daughter, in this vaſt extenſive view, art as a worm; but, as having an immortal ſoul, incapable of deſtruction from time, or change or chance, thou appeareſt *great* and awful; if thou art *good*, thou wilt be *for ever* happy in the preſence of thy *Father* and thy *God!*

M. I know that *God* is *my Father*, as well as the Father of angels; and that he will be my friend, if I obey him.

T. Think what a glorious creature thou art, by being *immortal!* and the *more glorious* for being *humble!*

M. Long may I remember your *words*, and never forget the value of my ſoul, for which the Son of God died upon the croſs.

T. As we muſt all of us exiſt through all eternity, little will it avail the children of *vice* and *folly*, on that awful day, when all hearts will be laid open before their tremendous Judge, if they ſhould call on the mountains to cover them!—They lived, and they muſt give account *how* they lived.

M. I hope, my Father, that your diſcourſe this evening will make a laſting impreſſion on my heart and underſtanding; that truſting in God, I may ſo *live* and *die*, as to become an object of the mercy of the Almighty.

MONDAY.

CONVERSATION XI.

M. YOU have made me one of the happieſt of beings! The more I think of our converſation of laſt night, the more my ſatisfaction increaſes. The world ſets light upon me; I am truly ſenſible of its joys, and yet they appear as nothing in compariſon of the *immortality* of my ſoul. The thoughts you have ſuggeſted to me make all my labours chearful, and guide me, like a ſweet companion, in the paths of eternal life. I hope, upon every occaſion of trial, I ſhall be convinced of the ſincerity of my own heart. *The advantages of faith.*

T. I am much rejoiced to find my ſentiments have made ſuch advantageous impreſſions: The end of all enquiry is to make us happier than we were before. We ſee inſtances enough how it fares with the *good* and *bad* in this world, to be convinced of the mercy and juſtice of God: whilſt the wickedneſs which frequently proſpers, and the virtue which goes unrewarded, prove to us that an account hereafter will be required; and that we ſhall be rewarded or puniſhed, according to the eternal wiſdom of the Almighty. It is no leſs obvious, that nothing is ſo important to us, as our ſtate and condition after death; nor any object capable of filling the mind with ſuch pleaſing wonder and amazement as the thought of *eternity!*—Thou haſt ſeen, in thy few years of life, that we are expoſed to the influence of many *bad examples*, and to various uncomfortable and *ſad accidents*, which we can neither foreſee nor prevent: and where can we find ſtrength to encounter the one, or wiſdom to fly from the other, if we do not ſeek for them in God?

M. I perceive

M. I perceive that the true uſe of the conſiderations of immortality, is to make them our real friends and ſupporters; for this, in effect, is throwing ourſelves on the juſtice and mercy of the *eternal God.*

T. That there will be rewards and puniſhments in another ſtate, is a truth aſſented to by all nations upon the earth; and what can be the rewards equal to the longings of the ſoul, but ſuch as will laſt for ever? Upon ſtrict enquiry, the wiſe have always found that every condition of life, ſupported by *virtue*, is calm and free from diſquiet, if not delightful: as every ſtate that is mixed with *vice* or *folly*, at length becomes *diſtaſteful*, though accompanied with all imaginable greatneſs; and therefore when the intereſt of the ſoul is neglected, it is a vain thing to ſeek for happineſs.

M. Indeed I ſee not how any one can hope to be happy, whilſt he is *vicious*; for God being the author of all that is good, and being perfect in himſelf, cannot beſtow his favour on the undeſerving.

T. We may conceal our wounds from the world, but our very *reaſon* will torture us when we diſobey it; and it is in vain, in ſuch caſes, to appeal to it, for it hath not power to adminiſter comfort againſt itſelf; whence thou mayſt eaſily comprehend what I have often intimated, that *peace* can be the reward only of *virtue*; and that our obedience to the laws of God is the grand ſupport of our hopes of happineſs after death.

M. With regard to the trials of our ſincerity, I have heard of a great foreign prince, who made uſe of a device in order to diſcover who, among his ſubjects, were *real chriſtians:* but have we no examples of that kind nearer home? Are none of our own *princes* renowned for piety, nor any *ſubjects* who, although not miniſters of God's word, are remarkable for their zeal and attention to the cauſe of religion?

T. As to this world, *Mary*, if the policy of ſtates and *godly wiſdom* were always in harmony with each other, we ſhould ſee nothing but *peace* among nations: but ſtateſmen are like other men, and they judge of what they are to do, by

by the opinion they entertain of the good or evil propenſities of mankind; and ſubject to act according to the dictates of their own paſſions. In our days, we behold a ſovereign who is a *chriſtian*; and though no *law* or *example* has all the influence or effect on us, which might be expected, yet *he* ſtands inflexible in maintaining the cauſe of heaven! Diſſipation and irreligion are very prevalent among many who are diſtinguiſhed by their rank and fortune, yet we have equal reaſon to believe, that there are great numbers whoſe hearts glow with piety and humanity, and who carefully improve their talents, whether theſe conſiſt in wealth, or power, in ſkill or character, to enable them to promote the glory of God, and the welfare of their country and mankind. Perhaps no nation ever exceeded this in the ſtudy and practice of the great truths of *chriſtianity*, in the perſons of men of ſuch ſuperior underſtanding, that the greateſt infidels honour their memory. I have heard my maſter often talk of great philoſophers and learned men, no leſs diſtinguiſhed for their converſation and manners, than for their writings, in praiſe of chriſtian duties *(a)*. It is not every age that produces ſuch extraordinary men, as to be at once celebrated for great talents in *ſcience* and *worldly* buſineſs; and equally excelling in *piety towards God*. The moſt devout are generally modeſt and reſerved; and although a *manly courage* is neceſſary to true piety, *infidelity* is oftentimes ſo bold and daring, as to leap over all the bounds of common decency.

M. Were none of theſe good men, *divines?*

T. Not by profeſſion; though they had ſtudied how they might beſt ſerve their Maker, or they could not have written ſo clearly as I underſtand they did.

M. We all ſtudy religion, ſo far as to know, what is *required*; and it is ſufficient for *us*, *in our condition*, to obey the laws of God.

T. Theſe *laymen* wrote their books on the divine authority of the holy ſcriptures, communicating their thoughts for the good of mankind. But although the arguments in

(a) Alludes to Boyle, Locke, Newton, Nelſon, &c.

in defence of the goſpel are ſufficiently convincing to every candid and impartial enquirer, yet all ages have produced *infidels* and vain diſputers, who have cavilled about myſterious points, of which God never made them the judges. And many, at all periods of time, have even ſcoffed at the words of *eternal life!*

M. Is it poſſible they could ſeriouſly *think* what they ſaid?

T. Why, in truth, I believe the hearts of many of them have ſecretly given them the lie, and revolted againſt the opinions they pretended to adopt: and it hath not been without great labour, that they have offered incenſe to their own *pride* and *ſelf-conceit*. I once told thee of the ſad effects of ſuperſtition: this makes a man a *fool*, but *infidelity* makes him *mad*. Few infidels have publicly recanted, or owned themſelves to have been in the wrong.

M. Which is the worſt, an unbelieving learned, or an unbelieving unlearned perſon?

T. I ſee no great difference: they both talk like fools or *madmen*, though in a different kind of words: I have always kept out of their company, obſerving that their unbelief has nouriſhed an infectious diſeaſe in their minds; for they are generally as debauched and wicked in practice, as they are in opinion: and if knowledge without virtue, and a juſt ſenſe of religion, were valuable, the devil himſelf might be in high eſteem. He had *wit* enough to *believe* and tremble, though not *virtue* to practiſe what he knew.—Thoſe who do not make diſtinctions of *good* and *evil*, condemn themſelves without any further trial: as ſuch who bid defiance to the common ſenſe of mankind, ought to live among themſelves, and we ſhould ſoon ſee how *impoſſible* it would be for their plan of life to render them peaceful, or happy in their agreement with each other.

M. You think, then, that the more one knows, the worſe, if we do not live good lives, and conſult the glory of God.

T. Whoever looks on himſelf as free from the obligations to obey the *laws of the Almighty*, will hardly ſhew any attention to the *laws of man*; and is therefore not to be truſted: and I hope thou wilt have wit enough to be on thy guard accord-

accordingly.—Alas! my daughter, in what terms ſhall I repreſent to thee the vanity of human life! The things which make moſt for our *peace* are not, in general, the objects of our greateſt attention. We live in a ſtate of intercourſe as ſocial beings, for each other's protection and preſervation; but we do not receive ſuch advantages from it, with reſpect to a future ſtate, as the great Lord of Nature intended we ſhould enjoy. *Attention to time, by religious diſcourſe.*

M. I fear it is but a ſmall portion of our time that we ſpend in converſation on *heavenly things*; and yet the living words of a ſenſible pious friend, make much deeper impreſſions than thoſe of a dead or abſent author, whoſe book we read.

T. Thou ſayeſt well: my maſter uſed to repeat a *Perſian* proverb, *The converſation of a friend brightens the eyes.* It is the exchange of thoughts by which the heart is tried.

M. The familiar diſcourſe of a virtuous perſon, whether it be very lively or not, ſeems by far the moſt valuable to the great ends of life.

T. Yes: but mankind rather ſeek to be *amuſed* than *inſtructed*; and to be put *out* of mind of ſerious things, rather than put *in* mind of them.

M. The converſation which guides us into the paths of everlaſting life, can come only from the good and wiſe.

T. Thoſe only deſerve the name of *friends*, with whom we may venture to paſs any conſiderable portion of our time; who are not only true to their own hearts, but confeſs the power of religion: perſons of a different turn may do us kindneſſes, and be agreeable companions, but they go no further. The conſideration which ought always to be uppermoſt in a man's thoughts, with regard to his company or his time, is *the end of his being*; and next to this, how to attain that end: and it is eaſy to comprehend, that whatever tends to promote the cauſe of religion, contributes in the ſame degree to the attainment of the *true end of life*. Some of the zealous, and ſome of the enthuſiaſtical part of us, talk occaſionally of religion; but for want of diſtinguiſhing true *zeal* from *enthuſiaſm*, which are as different as light from darkneſs, too many are apt to draw one common concluſion,

namely, that thoſe who love to ſpeak of *piety*, are not pious, in the ſenſe that piety is allowed to be amiable, good, and worthy of praiſe.

M. Is not this a ſtrange kind of concluſion?

T. It is ſtrange indeed, but the reaſon is obvious: if our minds are not bent on *heavenly things*, we ſhall hardly think they are ever mentioned in *proper* terms.—However, comfort thyſelf! there are many ſerious-minded, as well as fooliſh people in the world. Be not diſmayed at any negligence which thou mayeſt obſerve: we muſt make the beſt we can of the world as we find it, and not complain of other people's *coldneſs*, when we ſhould be learning how to cheriſh our own *zeal*, and promote the great cauſe of virtue and religion, by an habitual attention, reproving where we *can*, and lamenting where we *cannot* be of ſervice to mankind.

Influence of education.

M. Do not ſuch habits generally ariſe from education? Perhaps I might have been equally cold and indifferent to religion; and my heart as much a ſtranger to God, had I not been bleſſed with parents who took delight in communicating their own pious ſentiments.

T. I was always of opinion, that good inſtructions ſhould be inſtilled into the mind while it was tender and ſuſceptible of impreſſion; and have happily experienced the fruits of ſuch a practice with reſpect to thee; for I thank heaven thou haſt conſtantly repaid the affectionate care of thy kind mother and myſelf, with an earneſt attention and a diligent improvement.

M. Oft have I liſtened to your good diſcourſes, and perceived my underſtanding enlarged; and my heart corrected; nor was my fond mother leſs attentive to my welfare, for ſhe began, almoſt while I hanged upon her breaſt, to pour tender words of advice into my heart. Frequently, when I have found her on her knees, with eyes ſtreaming in tears, and have aſked the reaſon of her weeping, ſhe told me, that I was the ſubject of her prayers; that ſhe was intreating the *Almighty Parent* to pity my poverty and my ſex, and ſhield my perſon from the mercileſs hands of the vile deſtroyers

ſtroyers of female innocence, and from all the various calamities to which life is ſubject.

The danger of abuſing time.

T. She was very good, and loved thee much. Thou art now arrived at years of diſcretion, and knoweſt thine own danger, therefore be upon thy guard; exert thine own ſtrength, and call down new aſſiſtance from heaven; and be aſſured if thou prayeſt to thy Almighty Father, with real devotion, thou wilt be ſtrengthened againſt every temptation; and he who heareth in ſecret, will reward thee openly. All depends on the proper uſe of *time*, for this is the only means of preparing us for *eternity!*

M. I have been often told, even from the ploughman's mouth, that thoſe who are moſt fit to live, are the moſt fit to die.

T. The way to judge how fit we are to die, is by obſerving how we ſpend our time; for this diſcovers to us whether our inclinations are moſt prone to *good* or *evil.* The firſt maxim is to entertain an entire averſion to *ſloth* and *idleneſs*; and whatever the duties of our ſtation call on us to do, to perform it with ſpirit and alacrity, never putting off till to-morrow what we can do to-day. Thou mayſt obſerve, with regard to the brute creation, that they are entirely employed in *labour* or *reſt*; they are active to obtain their food, and as ready to refreſh themſelves; and they go no further. The greater part of the human ſpecies ſpend much time alſo in labour or reſt, without which, they could not find the means of their own ſupport: but the ſeventh day, however, is ſet apart to be free from labour; and *every* day and *every* hour furniſhes to *man*, employment for his immortal mind. *He* muſt conſider how to *live*, as an *accountable* being, that he may learn how to *die*, not as the *beaſt* that periſhes, but as the *heir* of immortality.

M. There needs no reaſoning to mark out the diſtinction, though we often call a man a *beaſt*, if he lives contrary to his reaſon.—I believe, my Father, that *man* is much *longer* lived than the moſt part of other creatures.

T. I never heard of any exact compariſon: there are but few animals that live above twenty or thirty years. But in the

the great view of the *immortality* of man, it is not of any moment, if his life be extended to *twenty*, or to an *hundred* years: the part which is paſt, or that which is preſent, in the computation of our exiſtence is the ſame.

M. And that which is to come, will, I fear, fly away as ſpeedily, and as little to be recalled as the paſt!

T. Conſider, my daughter, what *time* is! how reverential! how lovely! how adorable! But when abuſed and ſquandered, how miſerable! how hateful! So abhorred it is by ſome, that they curſe the hour in which they were born!

M. I am ſenſible there can be no advantage in *living*, but as we improve our time.

T. We ought to reckon thoſe days as loſt, in which we neither do, nor think any good; and worſe than loſt when we do evil.

M. You have explained to me how every one, though no higher than myſelf in condition, may do good *(a)*.

T. Every one ſhould conſider it as a duty he owes himſelf, to exerciſe his underſtanding and his heart, in acquiring ſuch habits of thinking, that the greateſt dangers may not terrify, nor the worſt examples corrupt: and do thou conſider it as no leſs ſtrong an obligation to keep thyſelf *out of danger*. We muſt always endeavour to act up to our own principles, though we ſhould often fail. Do thou, my daughter, make a covenant with thine eyes, not to behold any object, or follow any example, contrary to thy underſtanding, or which may ſully the purity of thy mind.

M. This is noble advice, my Father; but how can we live in the world, and follow it?

T. Some would ſay to me, Phyſician, cure thyſelf: and indeed we all flatter ourſelves as well as others; but if we duly reflect on the cauſe of the diſtreſſes which we lament in our preſent ſtate, and the miſeries which the wicked dread in a *life to come*, we ſhall go on from one ſtage of amendment to another, and learn to *hate* things which are attended with ſuch terrible effects, and *tremble* at the thought of guilt. We may cheat ourſelves, *Mary*, but depend upon this, whatever we hate, *That* we ſhall ſhun; and

(a) Pages 72, 73.

and for the very reaſon that we prefer health to ſickneſs, or eaſe to pain; we ſhould prefer virtue to vice, and conſequently turn our eyes from beholding wickedneſs. I have often told thee, that the only *ſure* way to prevent *evil*, is to do *good*; and therefore uſeful induſtry is the moſt faithful out-guard of virtue.

M. What do you think of them who ſpend their life in *amuſements*; and who, if they are not purſuing ſome diverſion, are at a loſs how to employ themſelves, and complain that the hours hang heavily on their hands?

T. Thoſe who ſeek for ſuch entertainment, not as a *recreation*, or a relief from the buſy cares of the world, but with a view, as it is often termed, to kill time, conſider but little what a ſad compliment they make to a gueſt, who, although we court him with all the ſmiles of *love*, and all the tenderneſs and reſpect of *friendſhip*, is ever on the wing. There is no occaſion to *murder* him to get quit of him. It is our *intereſt* to ſhew him the higheſt *reſpect*. To-day you and I *aroſe to new life*; and now we are about to *die* again. How quickly do the hours glide on from morn to noon, and from noon to night; when we fall into the arms of ſleep, which is the image of death! Nothing is more true, than that *yeſterday* is already *dead*; and *to-morrow* not yet *born*; what have we then except *to-day?* and ſhall one *poor day*, and this not *certain*, create ſuch diſtreſs, as to make us think of murdering it? Shall the fond *children of plenty*, to whom the hand of heaven is ſo indulgent, act as if they meant to ſhed the blood of their friend, who they ought to reverence? Time is the repreſentative of *immortality* with regard to our preſent ſtate, and the guide to *eternity!* O *Time, how awful, how adorable thou art! how precious to mortal man!*—What is life, *Mary*, but *time?* And what the various ways of ſpending it, but ſo many proofs of our inclinations to *wiſdom* or *folly*; while they ſerve as a *vane* to point to happineſs or miſery in the life to come! In every condition, pray for the proper uſe of time *(a)*; and the moſt wholeſome

(a) For the Uſe of Time in a good Life and a happy Death.

O Lord and Father of my life, teach me to conſider my days as paſſing away like a ſhadow! I beſeech thee to ſhed thy influence on my heart, that

wholeſome maxim is, that *innocence* and *idleneſs* cannot exiſt in the ſame perſon. If thou wouldſt be really happy, ſeek conſtantly to be employed. *Induſtry* in things uſeful and innocent, leads to things pious and important. Piety is an induſtrious habit of reverence and duty to That God, whoſe *active hand*, and vigilant care, perpetually extends over all his works!

M. Indeed, my Father, I agree with you entirely; and I find it as much my *pleaſure* as it is my intereſt, to be always employed. I have obſerved, that thoſe who are by inclination *idle*, ſuffer more pain in the indulgence, than it would coſt them in doing their duty. How many are more perplexed in the *buſineſs* of *trifling* away their time, than the induſtrious poor are troubled, on account of the hardeſt labour they are obliged to perform!

T. Thy remark is exceedingly juſt; and much to the *honour of induſtry!* But it goes much further: it proves the gracious deſign of Providence by putting the *rich* and *poor* more upon an equality, than either of them generally imagine. The *poor* fill up their day with *work*, ſuch as is uſeful to themſelves and the reſt of mankind; and the rich, who are of an idle and ſlothful temper, or not employed in uſeful occupations, are perpetually laying out what to do with *to-morrow*, or labouring in thought how they ſhall *fill up* their time *to-day*: they think they have a vaſt ſuperfluity, becauſe they cannot tell what to do with it. But they often repent the loſs of it, as many a prodigal hath done, who has ſquandered a large fortune, and been reduced to poverty and diſtreſs! Thoſe who underſtand the *value* of time, treat it as prudent people do

The infinite value of time.

that I may improve the remainder of *my time*, and recover the *precious hours* which I have loſt! Inſtruct me, O God of wiſdom, how to prepare myſelf for that hour, when I ſhall appear before thy judgment-ſeat! that being full of the hopes of a bliſsful immortality, I may rather *deſire* than *dread* my diſſolution. Thy eternal decree is paſt, and it is appointed to man once to die; O teach me ſo to employ myſelf, that I may meet the king of terrors without diſmay: teach me to receive him as a welcome meſſenger, and whether early or late, let me joyfully obey thy ſummons! This I beg, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake. *Amen.*

do their money, inſtead of ſquandering it upon things *of no uſe*, they make a *little* go a great way in what is *neceſſary*. The right uſe and application of time make life both *long* and *pleaſant*; and every one having this in his power, how ſhocking it is to hear people complain, that their *hours* move *heavily*, when they ſhould be working with *their hands*, or performing an act of *charity*, or reading ſome *pious* or uſeful book, or doing ſomething which will make themſelves or others wiſer, better, and happier than they were before?

M. Why will they not bring *the day which muſt come*, home to their breaſt at once; and while they have an opportunity, do that *grand neceſſary buſineſs*, upon which their *eternal* happineſs depends, and for the accompliſhment of which perhaps not another day may be given?

T. In this very thing conſiſts the great folly and madneſs of thoſe who abuſe *time*, or devote their hours to wickedneſs. The firſt is what we call *putting off the evil day*; the laſt is making the day evil. It is remarkable, that thoſe who make the beſt uſe of their time, have no notion of being ever at a loſs what to do with it: *They* find none of that *liſtleſſneſs* which invades others of a different character. Some for want of diſtinguiſhing what is uſeful and important, are extremely *idle*, when they think themſelves buſy. Haſt thou never obſerved, that people of buſineſs who are induſtrious, and arrange their hours, find time for offices of humanity as well as piety; whilſt thoſe, who are much addicted to *pleaſure*, find no leiſure for *ſuch duties?* On the contrary, if any good is to be done, they excuſe themſelves on account of engagements, or without a ſhadow of truth complain of their want of time. Such is the force of *habit*; and ſuch the folly of a *wicked*, or a *childiſh* abuſe of time.

We are, at all ſeaſons, *enjoying good*, or *ſuffering evil:* every *word* and *deed*, nay every *thought*, has a good or evil tendency: There is hardly ſuch a thing as total indifference. It is the good or bad temper of the mind which gives a tincture to our conduct, while the exerciſe of *gratitude*——the *practice of moderation* in good fortune—patience and reſignation under adverſity—are as ſo many offices of life, which require time for the performance of them: and happy

it is when we can *recollect the time* which we ſpend in making the mind its own object, or contemplating the good thoughts which have paſſed in our hearts. There is a complacency that naturally attends us, when we are *active* and *do well*, far exceeding the higheſt joys which are to be found in indolence.

M. Every one hath a ſoul, and if he will look after it carefully, he will find full employment for his time. I am very ſenſible that there are many inclinations in *my* heart which I muſt watch over; many temptations which I muſt reſiſt; and many corruptions which I muſt mortify. And as to graces and good habits, I wiſh for *time* to improve them, and make up for the days which I have loſt.

T. This is the very caſe; and glad I am that thou who art ſo young, doſt comprehend it ſo well. If we believe the wiſe man, "To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time for "every purpoſe under heaven." But the "time preſent is "the only time we have to *repent* in; to *ſerve God*; to *do good* "to men; to *improve our knowledge*; to *exerciſe our graces*; "and to prepare for a *bleſſed immortality!*"

M. If *time* be a treaſure of ſuch vaſt value, and the means whereby we acquire immortal happineſs, we ſhould guard it as the apple of the eye, and ſee that it ſuffers no injury

T. True, my daughter; if we do it any violence, it will recoil on our own boſom: *Time* is revenged on all who treat him ill, and many a bitter tear hath fallen on his account.

M. Is it not ſtrange, that in general mankind do not learn more, neither from experience nor *inſtruction?*

The advantages to be derived from the clergy, and the reſpect due to them.

T. I have been juſt ſpeaking of the advantages of *education:* beſides this, in all *chriſtian* countries, and perhaps in all others, where any notion of *religion* prevails, there are perſons appointed to inſtruct. Theſe are carefully brought up in the ſtudy of divine things; and in ſome countries, as for inſtance in this, they are learned and pious; their time is devoted to the care of the ſouls of men; they continually preach immortality, and warn us of the wrath of heaven, if we live impenitently.

M. When

M. When I am ſeparated from you, my Father, and I can no longer enjoy the advantage of your converſation, I ſhall be at a loſs for help in my ſpiritual warfare.

T. Thou haſt given a proper name to the condition of life with regard to a future ſtate; for indeed it is a warfare, and requires much courage to defend ourſelves againſt the temptations of the world.

M. The ſincerity of our hearts can be made manifeſt only by trials.

T. Our whole life is a trial, *Mary*; but we ſhould take care not to act the part of the devil, by throwing temptations in each other's way, upon the abſurd notion of *ſinning*, in order to repent, or that *grace* may abound. On ſome great occaſions, great trials have been made for good purpoſes. My maſter uſed to talk of the firſt *chriſtian Roman emperor (a)*, who, in order to know the hearts of ſome of his miniſters, whether they believed in the *immortality of the ſoul, as revealed by Chriſt*, and acknowledged him as the *Meſſiah*, pretended to favour his *heathen* ſubjects, inviting the profeſſed chriſtians to declare, whether they choſe to hold their offices under him, by worſhipping the *heathen gods*, or to give them up, and adhere to their *chriſtian* principles. By this means he diſcovered who were *really chriſtians*; for thoſe, he knew, would not regard any thing which *he* could give them, in compariſon of their *religion:* he accordingly honoured thoſe who declined temporal advantages on ſuch terms, with the higheſt marks of his favour; believing that ſuch a conduct proceeded from a ſtrong perſuaſion of the great truths of chriſtianity, juſtly concluding that he might truſt, not only his *government* but his *life* alſo, in the hands of men actuated by ſuch principles.—Whatever complaints we may make, with regard to thoſe defects in government which ſeem extremely difficult, in our corrupt ſtate, to remedy, we know from experience, that the eſtabliſhment of the regular clergy, as an order of men devoted to religion, is attended with many great advantages. What ſhould

(a) Page 176 alludes to the ſame ſtory of Conſtantine.

ſhould *we* do, who have no learning, if we had *no paſtors and guides?* It is to be hoped, that the clergy are as *willing* as they are *able* to do their office, and will not ceaſe to labour for the preſervation of our ſouls. Thy regular attendance on divine ſervice, and the ſermons which thou wilt hear at thy pariſh church, improved by thy meditations and reading good books at home, on fit occaſions, will enlighten thy underſtanding, and direct thy *general* conduct: and if any *particular* diſtreſs ſhould affect thy mind, have recourſe to the miniſter, who will give thee full ſatisfaction, and guide thee into the paths of comfort and peace. When the character of a clergyman is properly ſupported, it is the object of honour and eſteem; and thou wilt find, that the higher ſenſe thou ſhalt entertain of thy duty to *God*, the more reſpect thou wilt have for his miniſters, as the teachers of godlineſs; and thy veneration for them will help thee forward in the ways of righteouſneſs: as one mark of thy regard, I charge thee to pray for them, and for the ſucceſs of their miniſtry *(a)*.

M. I have always eſteemed a miniſter of the goſpel, being a good man, as entitled to a peculiar reſpect, and have often thought that the neglect of religion, and the contempt of the clergy, go together.

T. Thoſe are generally the moſt abandoned people who affect to deſpiſe the clergy. Some of our divines may not be ſo reſpectable in all inſtances as we wiſh; alas, where ſhall we find perfection in every member of any great body! But this important order of men in our nation, is more ſober and more

(a) For the Clergy.

Moſt gracious Lord and Father of men, protect, I beſeech thee, the miniſters and ſtewards of thy goſpel; give them the true knowledge and underſtanding of thy word, that we may enjoy the pure religion which is eſtabliſhed amongſt us. Grant that they may lead their lives according to the bleſſed hopes whereunto they are called; that by their perſuaſive eloquence and pious example, their zeal and benevolence, in ſowing the ſeeds of thy word in our hearts, we may bring forth the fruits of holineſs, and at length reap the glorious harveſt of immortal joy. This I beg, O merciful God, for the ſake of the great High Prieſt, Chriſt, the Saviour of the world! *Amen.*

more learned, than the clergy of moſt other countries: and I believe *they* would be ſtill more diligent in *their* duty, if *we* attended more to *ours*.

M. What is required of us on this head?

T. The inſtruction handed down to us for above two thouſand years by the *Royal Preacher*, is expreſt in the cleareſt terms. He ſays, "Fear the Lord with all thy ſoul, and *re-* "*verence* his *prieſts*: love him that made thee, with all thy "ſtrength, and *forſake* not his *miniſters*."

M. I now recollect this paſſage; there are others to the ſame effect; and it is moſt natural to preſume, that thoſe who fear God will reſpect his *immediate ſervants*.

T. The *wiſe man* ſeems to conſider it as a trial whether we love God or not, by our *reverencing* or *forſaking* his miniſters. And I appeal to thy heart, if it was not natural for a wiſe man to draw this concluſion, becauſe in common life, in proportion as we love the *maſter*, we ſhew a proper regard to his ſervants? As *thou* loveſt God, I charge thee to reſpect his miniſters; and the more they are reſpected by others, the more honour themſelves will have for the livery they wear, and attend the more to their own duty. And now, *Mary*, the laſt thing which I have to recommend to thee is *repentance*. *Repentance.*

M. Time being of ſo vaſt a value in every concern of life, and moſt of all in the great buſineſs of *repentance*, how comes it, my Father, that ſo few ſeem to conſider this and their everlaſting happineſs or miſery, to be inſeparably connected.

T. They do not think of the reaſon why time is given them; but I am willing to ſuppoſe that many more repent than appear to do ſo: if they do it not ſo effectually as they ought, yet ſtill they look back with ſorrow on the faults and ſins they have committed, and I hope they endeavour to make their peace with heaven. It is true, that conſidering how noble and excellent a creature man is, if we did not ſee it with our eyes, we ſhould not believe it to be poſſible he could think of *immortality*, and remain careleſs to the neceſſary concerns of his *ſoul!*

M. Are

M. Are not the conſiderations of *death* and *repentance* generally conſidered as united?

T. As the moſt part of mankind are apt to confine their thoughts to this world, and deceive themſelves with regard to the probable *diſtance* of their death, ſo the buſineſs of *repentance* is too often deferred. Do thou prove to thyſelf that thou loveſt God, by praying to him *(a)*; and take notice how the wiſe correct *their* faults, by obſerving wherein *others* are defective: remembering, that thoſe who intend to deal honeſtly by themſelves, and do not practice *ſelf-denial* in many inſtances, act abſurdly: it is the moſt difficult part; but it is eſſential to us as *chriſtians*, and it grows familiar by habit. Pray to God that thou mayſt lay ſuch wholeſome reſtraints on thyſelf, as are neceſſary to thy ſafety *(b)*.

M. I have often heard people talk of *repentance*, who I had too much reaſon to believe, did not know what it meant.

T. They

(a) For the Love of God.

O Lord, who never faileſt to help and ſupport them who are ſtedfaſt in thy fear and love, give me thy grace, that I may ſhew forth my love by my obedience. Keep me, I beſeech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and make me to have ſuch a perpetual fear and zealous awe of thy holy name, that I may ever live without offending thee, and finally be received into thy glory, through Jeſus Chriſt my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

(b) For Mortification and Self-denial.

O merciful Lord and ſupreme Director of all things in heaven and earth, who in thine infinite wiſdom haſt appointed laws to preſerve all thy creatures in their ſeveral kinds; I beſeech thee to give me thy aid, that I may mortify and ſubdue my luſts and irregular affections; and ſo *die* unto ſin, that I may *live* unto righteouſneſs. Let no ſelf-indulgence prevent my attention to ſuch objects as are pleaſing to thee; but make me an inſtrument of thy providence, in promoting the happineſs of my fellow-ſubjects and mankind. Grant me, O Lord, ſo to live on earth, that in thy good time, I may be removed into thoſe manſions, where *ſin* cannot approach, and *death* ſhall no more have dominion over me. This I beg, O Lord of mercy, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe life on earth was a ſcene of ſuffering, and who at length died an ignominious death, to redeem a ſinful world! *Amen.*

T. They *muſt* have had ſome notion of *ſorrow* and *amendment*, though not perhaps a due conſciouſneſs of their guilt, nor a perfect knowledge *how* they ought to repent.

M. One would not imagine that there is much difficulty in this.

T. More difficulty, *Mary*, than thou ſeemeſt to be aware of; not ariſing from the thing itſelf, but from careleſſneſs, diſſipation of thought, or want of recollection what particular ſins we have been guilty of, and in what degree we have treſpaſſed on the laws of God. Many are ignorant of their own condition, whoſe want of knowledge proceeds from their perverſeneſs and want of care; and they are *criminal*, in having been perverſe and careleſs. It is equally evident that thoſe who are not of *a penitential* diſpoſition, are deficient as *chriſtians*, impenitency being a manifeſt violation of the chriſtian law, which requires *repentance* as the *condition* of pardon.

M. Does not a *general repentance*, in which we include all our ſins, operate as ſtrongly on the mind, as the recollection of *particular ſins*, or habitual offences?

T. I do not comprehend how we can *lump our ſins* in this way: if we repent at all, we muſt diſtinguiſh ſins, as we diſtinguiſh *ſinners*. *All men are ſinners*; yet upon the compariſon, St. *Paul* ſays, that the *law is not made for a righteous man*; *(for againſt ſuch there is no law) but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, the unholy and profane—for manſlayers—for whoremongers—for liars—for perjured perſons,—and if there be any other thing that is contrary to ſound doctrine (a).* As for ſuch as love truth, act righteouſly, and fear God, though they are encompaſſed with many infirmities, the ſcripture ſpeaks of them *as walking in all the commandments of the law blameleſs*; and it was not ſuch as theſe our Saviour came into the world to call to repentance.

M. But are there any ſo perfect as to need *no repentance?*

T. I may ſafely pronounce there are none: I only ſpeak of the *diſtinctions* which ariſe both from reaſon and ſcripture, comparing the beſt men with the worſt, inſomuch that ſome are

(a) Gal. v. 23.

are called *righteous*. *All men* being made rational creatures, are obliged to obey the laws of their Maker, and there can be no excuſe for tranſgreſſing them; but in our preſent ſtate, our *underſtandings* are ſo ſubject to error and deluſion; our *wills* to corruption; our *paſſions* to become *blind and head-ſtrong*; and the temptations that ſurround us are ſo numerous and powerful, we have the ſame divine authority for this ſad truth, that *there is no man liveth and ſinneth not*.

M. I apprehend, that without ſuch authority, we might eaſily believe it: but upon what foundation do *you*, my Father, entertain the comfortable hopes of pardon at the hands of God?

T. I keep up in my mind a ſenſe of my *paſt guilt*, and am ſorrowful when I think of it: I ſee the *unreaſonableneſs* of ſin in its own nature, and am fearful of the diſpleaſure of the Almighty. Thus I prepare myſelf for *repentance:* and in proportion as I *amend*, I hope for pardon at the merciful hands of God!—It is very obvious, that thoſe will be moſt apt to repent, whoſe diſpoſitions are in general the *beſt*, and whoſe habits of vice are of the ſhorteſt duration, and the leaſt obſtinate and inveterate: ſtill it is the conſideration of the *goodneſs* and *mercy* of God, which affords us the reaſonable hopes, that our repentance and amendment will not be in vain.

M. How will it fare with others more obſtinate?

T. God only knows the heart: the greater the ſin, the greater ſhould the repentance be.

M. How are we to conquer our doubts, if any ariſe upon this occaſion?

T. By uſing our *reaſon*; by exerciſing our *faith*; by humbly referring ourſelves to that very goodneſs and mercy which I have juſt mentioned: and can any thing be more agreeable than this to the *common ſenſe of mankind?* Thou art as able to judge as the moſt learned.——If we look back into the hiſtory of men, we ſhall ſoon ſee how bright the mercies of *heaven* have ſhined upon the earth. Thou haſt read the *Old Teſtament*, though perhaps not in ſuch a manner as to remark, that the Almighty was pleaſed, after various trials of the *Jews*, his then *choſen people*, to remove

their

their doubts, and confirm their hopes and expectations by the promiſe of his mercy, appointing certain ſacrifices and oblations, as ſatisfaction for ſuch ſins as were not of the moſt *preſumptuous* kind: afterwards, he ſignified by his *prophets*, that if they would forſake their ſins, and amend their lives, he would accept the ſacrifice of a *broken ſpirit*, and would not deſpiſe a *contrite* heart. At length he ſent the *mighty Prophet* and Saviour of the world! *His* commiſſion was to preach repentance and remiſſion of ſins *to all* the nations of the earth; declaring that it is not the *will of God* that *any* ſhould periſh, but that *all* ſhould come to *repentance:* adding moreover, that there is more *joy in heaven* over *one ſinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons*, ſuch as I have been ſpeaking of, who, (in the comparative view of mankind) *need no repentance.*

M. I remember the parable of the *prodigal ſon*, whoſe miſeries moved the *compaſſion* of his *Father*, even to excite the *jealouſy* of his virtuous *brother*.

T. Is not that a beautiful repreſentation of the fooliſhneſs of the human heart? This young man did not conſider that the innocence which needs no repentance, is incomparably more valuable than the deepeſt contrition which guilt can produce. If I had eſcaped from any great danger, would it not give thee the moſt ſenſible pleaſure? But thou wouldſt ſhudder at the thought of my putting myſelf again in the ſame ſituation.

M. This indeed is true, and it explains the doctrine in queſtion; and ſince there are ſo many infirmities which cleave to our imperfect nature, of which we are conſcious witneſſes, where can we go for relief but to our heavenly Father; and whoſe interceſſion can we implore, except his who is the great Mediator for mankind?—But all ſins are not equally heinous.

T. No: but the authority which requires obedience in one caſe, extends to all caſes; and we muſt take care not to deceive ourſelves by any partial obedience.

M. But ſtill there is a *difference* as to the *degree* of offences.

T. Without doubt: *Envy*, which ſeems to have been the crime of the prodigal's brother, is a ſubject of *repentance*, though not equal to malice, which proceeds to action: So violence, by which our neighbour is deprived of his goods, is not ſo highly criminal as *murder*. Deceit calculated for a leſs pernicious purpoſe, does not ſeem to be ſo bad as actual fraud whereby another is plunged into poverty and diſtreſs. He who looks at his neighbour's wife or daughter, with covetous or impure thoughts, without any intention of *evil*, the ſin cannot be equal to the *actual* violation of his bed, or the ſeduction of his child.——By fixing our penitential thoughts on the immediate object of our guilt *paſt*, or to *prevent the ſin which moſt eaſily beſets us*, we ſhall the more eaſily diſcover whether we are *ſincere* or not, and if we repent to any good purpoſe. The greater our lamentation is for our immediate offences, the fairer proſpect there will be, that our prayers will reach the ears of the Almighty.

M. I think that the beſt part we can act, is to be watchful not to ſin, that we may ſhed the fewer tears, and ſuffer the leſs bitterneſs of ſoul!

T. True: but when our conſciouſneſs excites our ſorrow, the deeper the humiliation of the heart, the more acceptable will be the incenſe of our prayers.

M. Many ſin in *confidence* that they ſhall live to repent.

T. Very few of us do evil, without a conſciouſneſs of it: and I fear that what thou ſayeſt is a common crime, whilſt it proves what a ſad bargain they make with themſelves who thus tranſgreſs, not only from the *uncertainty of life*, but that their offence is aggravated by their *preſumption*.

M. But you was ſpeaking of the little attention commonly ſhewn, in aſſiſting each other in the great buſineſs of *repentance*.

T. It is certain, that inſtead of giving the *moſt* aſſiſtance that is practicable to thoſe who need it, we generally give the *leaſt* that can be imagined, whether it be wanted or not—and yet it is confeſſed that we ought to love each other to the laſt breath; to ſtand firm in all extremities, and manfully to bear the condition of mortality.

M. It ſeems as if we had not *courage* to act up to the dictates of our *reaſon* and *conſcience*.

T. This depends very much on the cuſtoms of the world: let us thank God that there are ſome exceptions to general practices. I have often heard it remarked, that when our *manners* were leſs *poliſhed*, we were more open and communicative, and ſpoke the language of truth and right reaſon more than we do now. Whether this be really ſo or not, I cannot tell thee; but this I know, that we all learn to be *brave*, like ſoldiers, by habit; and it is obvious that if people of ability were to talk in a *manly ſtrain* upon awful occaſions, it would awe many a libertine, and probably rouſe the ſpirits of thoſe who are ſupine and negligent; and in ſome caſes of *ſickneſs*, it might arreſt the arm of death, or make his dart leſs painful. If friends and relations were to endeavour by *prayer*, *diſcourſe*, and *reading*, to inſpire each other with a *contempt of death*, we ſhould learn by *cuſtom* to be more *manly* in ſentiment, more *devoutly penitent*, and better qualified to try the adventurous voyage of death.

M. Is it really a rare thing that any ſpiritual aſſiſtance is given, even by thoſe who profeſs themſelves friends?

T. Very few, I believe, receive the leaſt help from friends to brighten their hopes of happineſs!

M. I am ſorry for it, for *good men* might be as angels of comfort, to waft the ſoul to everlaſting reſt!

T. We are not uſed to things of this kind: many do not comprehend what generous actions the human heart is capable of, or how the houſe of *mourning* can be better than the houſe of *feaſting*. No act of generoſity can excel that of giving aſſiſtance to a friend, at the laſt *ſad parting* of ſoul and body: and the remembrance of ſuch a manly, pious behaviour at ſuch a time, would afford the higheſt ſatisfaction in that hour when we ourſelves come to try the ſame experiment.

M. Do we not always recommend *late repentance* rather than *none*; and repentance on a death-bed, when we can have no other?

T. Yes: but whether *repentance* come *late* or *early*, according to the ordinary cuſtom of the world, it is ſuppoſed

to reſt entirely on the ſick perſon's *will* and inclination: and where we wiſh to ſee *contrition* prevail, we often find it not.—O learn, my daughter, to reject the folly of thoſe who hope they ſhall repent, though they know not *when*, nor *where*, nor *how*. They are only ſure they ſhall *die* ſome time or other, and they obſerve that people uſually die in beds; and conclude *they* ſhall have a *death-bed repentance*; but what that generally is, they do not think of. Such is the ſituation of this matter, which is more eaſily to be imagined than deſcribed.

M. It is commonly ſuppoſed, that it will anſwer no *good* purpoſe, to ſpeak of *repentance* to one on a ſick bed, unleſs the patient be an abandoned wicked perſon.

T. We generally ſuppoſe this, and yet in ſuch a caſe it is much to be feared it can anſwer no end: in ſhort, if the *very good* need no aſſiſtance, and it is ſuppoſed to be beſtowed in vain on the *very bad*: and if thoſe alſo who are in the middle ranks of virtue are left to themſelves on this occaſion, I leave thee to judge of the reſt. Make the beſt uſe thou canſt of what I am ſaying, and immediately and without delay pray for *repentance* and the *pardon of thy ſins (a)*. Be aſſured, that the offerings which we make in health, as they are the moſt free, they are the moſt *ſatisfactory* to ourſelves, and the moſt exemplary to others; and whatever concluſions *we* may draw concerning the circumſtances of any one's dying, the hour of death may differ very little, in the ſight of God, from any hour in life. The *good* generally die in peace; and many not good, go off not ſenſible of their danger. Whether we have opportunities of knowing

(a) For Repentance and Pardon of Sin.

O God, behold thy ſinful creature proſtrate before thy ſacred throne, in deep humiliation of heart, imploring thy mercy and forgiveneſs! Break not the *bruiſed reed*, O Lord, nor *quench the ſmoaking flax!* Shut not up thy tender mercies in diſpleaſure, but let the *bones* which thou haſt broken rejoice! Deliver me, O my Father, from all the numerous ſins which I have been guilty of, and ſuffer not the enemies of my ſoul to triumph over me. O lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and give me *thy peace*. This I beg, O God, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, who died upon the croſs for the ſins of the world! *Amen.*

ing the thoughts of dying perſons or not, if we mean to form any judgment which may be of uſe to us, we ſhould conclude that every day ſpent in the exerciſe of reaſon and obedience to God, during our *health and ſpirits*, muſt be acceptable to him.

I hope that what I am ſaying will put thee on thy guard, that thou mayſt not expect more than *neighbour's fare*, nor *fondly* truſt to any help from others, when thou knoweſt that it is not uſual for any to be given. Liſten not to thine heart, nor entertain fond hopes of *diſtant good*, in the amendment of thy life, unleſs thou doſt *inſtantly* apply for remedies to heal the wounds which ſin and folly make in the ſoul: leave falſe hopes to thoſe who not content to walk in the plain beaten track of *piety* and *ſolid ſenſe*, ſeek their own deluſion. The *knowledge* of *Chriſt* darts forth brilliant light, and cheers the heart with comfort and with joy!——The more thou knoweſt, within the meaſure that thy mind can well contain and truly comprehend, the more thou wilt diſcern the *goodneſs* of God which ſhines forth, bleſſing us mortals with peace, and the hopes everlaſting joy!

M. My dear Father, I feel my heart comforted and delighted by the thoughts which you communicate; and however gradual my own advances in piety may be, the ſatisfaction which ſprings up in my mind is a pleaſing proof of the ſincerity of it; and as I do not mean to truſt to a *death-bed repentance*, I pray for That peace of God which the world cannot give *(a)*.

T. If this be thy reſolution, act conſiſtently with thyſelf, and live *prepared for death*; not truſting to thou knoweſt not what, in a concern of ſuch moment. Be zealous and attentive, that *every hour* of thy life be ſpent in ſuch a manner, as

(a) For Peace of Conſcience.

Almighty and everlaſting God, who governeſt all things in heaven and earth, mercifully hear my ſupplication. O grant that I may live in conſtant remembrance of my duty to thee, and never dare to offend againſt thy holy laws. Make me vigilant to obey thee in all things, that I may enjoy *thy peace* all the *days of my life*, through Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

as may please thy Maker, so that all may go well with thee in the end.—Remember, if thou puttest off till to-morrow, what thou wouldst do to-day, if thou wert about to die, thou art not only guilty of *presumption*, but it is highly probable thou wilt *never* do it. *To-morrow* and *to-morrow*, creep on, in a stealing pace, to the end of our days. *To-morrow* can never be *to-day*: We never can be sure of thinking *to-morrow* as we do *to-day*: but in this case if we *should* think to-morrow exactly as we do to-day, then, we still think only of *to-morrow*, or a time to come: the *time present* flies away, and the business remains undone.

M. Your words carry with them the force of conviction: O, how wretched are those poor mortals, who will not attend to lessons in which they are so much interested!

T. The lamp of life is burning out, though behind the curtain; and when the oil is spent, the light will be extinguished. So it is with the *light of life!* And *wisdom* shines brightest when our attention is most enlivened.

M. It shall be my constant care so to restrain my passions, that I may guide them right, and by the mercy of God keep myself unspotted.

T. Love *God* as thy *Father* and thy *Friend*;—obey *him* as thy *Lord*;—adore him for his *mercy*;—fall down before him as thy *judge*;—and remember, that his *justice* is as great as his *mercy!*—Do this, and thou wilt live and die acceptably in his sight, whose *loving-kindness* is better than *life itself!* Be not flattered with vain conceits, for he will reward or punish agreeably to his *wisdom* and his *justice*, as well as his *mercy*.

M. I will endeavour to keep in my mind a due sense of what is to come hereafter: I will think of those glories which shall one day be revealed, and pray to the Almighty that I may partake of them *(a)*. For this purpose I will strive

(a) For a just Sense of Duty towards God.

O eternal God, who inhabitest the heaven of heavens, I beseech thee in thy goodness, to give me such a sense of the exceeding great and inconceivable glories of the regions of the blessed, that my affections may be weaned from an inordinate love of this world. Teach me, O almighty Father, so to discipline my imagination, and restrain my desires,

ſtrive to keep my conſcience void of offence, that I may have but little buſineſs on my hands, at the laſt hour, whenever it ſhall come!

T. Fear not, my daughter: reſolution will make thee ſtrong, and thy ſtrength will be thy happineſs. *Repentance* and a *good life* are to the ſoul, what health is to the body: they preſerve the peace of the mind, and more than countervail all the evils which can befall us. Every thing being ſo tranſitory and periſhing, the *greateſt wiſdom* is to think of *eternity*, and the beſt leſſon we can be inſtructed in, is a preparation for it. Whatever the events of thy life ſhall prove, behave as one to whom immortal happineſs is promiſed. Be *reſolved*, I ſay, in reſiſting evil, and patient under croſs accidents. If at any time thy miſery ſhould be great, though *great miſery* is ſeldom the lot of the *virtuous*, ſtill conſider that it will not laſt long. Thou wilt make an *end of it*, or it will make an *end of thee*. *Death*, the great finiſher of human ſorrows, will at length terminate the conflict, and give thee reſt!

And now, my daughter, I think we have gone through *all that I can teach*, or explain, concerning a *future ſtate* of rewards and puniſhments: and perhaps it is full as much *as thou needeſt to know*. We now ſtand before our everlaſting Father, and the ſovereign Lord of the univerſe, on a great and ſolemn occaſion!——very great to *ourſelves*, whatever it may be to the world. As a *Father*, I *command* thee; as a *friend*, I *entreat* thee, to live a virtuous and religious life. Pray conſtantly and uniformly every morning and night. This will render the conſideration of the *immortality* preſented to thy view, moſt familiar to thee, whilſt the recollection that thou art *mortal*, will reſtrain thee and keep thee in awe. *Remember thy end*, and thou wilt not do amiſs.

Tremble

deſires, that my repentance and amendment may be true and conſtant; my ſpirit free from all wandering and diſtracted thoughts; and my converſation in all things agreeable to thy righteous laws! Grant this, O merciful God! and finally by thy infinite goodneſs and compaſſion receive me into everlaſting glory, for the ſake of my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer, who died upon the croſs for repentant ſinners! *Amen.*

Tremble at the thought of offering any violence to thy *ſoul*. Be on thy guard, *Mary*, for *my* ſake as well as *thy own*, that thou mayſt never give my heart a ſtab, and bring theſe grey locks with ſorrow to the grave. If thou followeſt our *religion*, which is the guide of life, and obeyeſt the precepts which I have given thee, though we ſhould be viſited by the iron hand of *adverſity*, yet our lives will be *comfortable*; and our *deaths*, when heaven ſhall call us hence, will open to us a paſſage to a joyful, and a glorious eternity!

TUESDAY.

CONVERSATION XII.

Deaths of Perſons of various Characters, and Obſervations on them.

M. I Was afraid laſt night that you meant to take your leave of me, in regard to your diſcourſe on *religion*: I hope, my dear Father, you will indulge me a little further. The reliſh you have given me of things relating to my *immortal ſtate*, makes me ſtill wiſh for more of your converſation. You, who know my heart, will not be ſurprized that I ſhould take pleaſure in reflecting on the happineſs of the life to come: How it may fare with others, whether of my age, or my elders, I know not; but indeed I find nothing in this world which gratifies my reaſon ſo much, or fills my mind with ſuch aſſurance, that I am purſuing my greateſt good.

The ſteady ſatisfaction ariſing from religious contemplations.

T. Dear *Mary!*—I know not how to expreſs the ſatisfaction which I feel, in hearing thee talk ſo much like a *rational being* and a *chriſtian*. O my daughter, how happy it would be, if we all attended to our true intereſt! If religion rightly underſtood, were duly practiſed, how amiable ſhould we mortals appear in each others eyes!—All would be peace and harmony! The time we ſpend on earth might appear the *ſhorter*, becauſe it would be the happier; but we ſhould not therefore lament the ſwiftneſs of its flight. Let us take things as they are: and what can we ſay, but that we have very little more time than juſt to look about us and to

die? At beſt we can ſee but as through a glaſs, darkly, but the more our faith and hopes are enlivened, the calmer our minds will be, and in ſo much the greater ſplendor will the glories of creation appear. It is our confidence in *God* which rejoices the heart, and diſpels the gloom with which folly and iniquity are ſo apt to overwhelm us. But tell me truly, *Mary*, haſt thou *really* thought on thy pillow, on the ſubjects of our converſation, and felt no mixture of terror from them?

M. Believe me, I have conſidered them all: *you* have taught me to *think without fear*. Reflections on death were indeed frightful to me once, but I know not by what powerful art you have led me by the hand, to the verge of eternity, and I look towards it with an undaunted ſpirit. This world appears to me as an object indeed, in which I have a great intereſt, ſo far as it is a means by which I diſcharge my duty to God, as preparatory to the world to come. I am convinced that the more my mind is exalted with love and gratitude towards my Maker, the more comfort I ſhall receive in the bleſſings of this life. Nor am I leſs ſenſible that the greater my induſtry and attention to ſocial duties, the better I ſhall anſwer the deſigns of Providence in the general happineſs of my fellow-creatures.

T. Thy obſervation, *Mary*, might put many to the bluſh, whoſe education hath been far ſuperior to thine: but *common ſenſe* is the beſt ſenſe, and we are all *reaſonable* creatures. *Thy* reaſoning is certainly founded in truth, and ſupported by experience; for whatever may be pretended to the contrary, the ways of wiſdom are ways of pleaſantneſs: and if *all her paths* are peace, what are the paths of folly and iniquity?

Manner of the deaths of ſeveral perſons under different circumſtances.

M. I thank you, my Father, for your good opinion; but you muſt not forget my requeſt. Your age and experience have furniſhed you with many uſeful leſſons drawn from the lives and deaths of others. *Example* and *inſtruction* make a more laſting impreſſion than inſtruction only.—Pray tell me what you recollect concerning the manner in which perſons, whom you have known, have taken their leave of this world.

T. It

T. It will give me great pleaſure to inform thee; but thou art not to expect that there is ſo great a variety in characters as generally imagined.

M. When I think of the great truths of *chriſtianity* reduced to practice, on great occaſions, the ſtory you told me of our country-woman Mrs. *Aſkew*, occurs to my thoughts. She died for her *religion*; and reſigned her life, rather than ſay that ſhe thought what ſhe did not think, or that ſhe believed what ſhe conceived to be falſe. *Death in the cauſe of faith.*

T. Thoſe who ſuffer upon a right principle, rejoice that they are counted worthy to ſuffer: and to refer their cauſe to the judgment of God, is ſurely a higher proof of wiſdom than any appeal to an earthly tribunal. We ſee with our eyes the bounties of heaven diffuſed, the ſun ſhining upon the unjuſt as well as the juſt: but we are equally ſatisfied in our hearts that the *diſtinction* will be made after we have cloſed the ſcene of life, and that the applauſe will be given where infinite wiſdom ſhall judge it to be due. I have received great benefit in my own ſpiritual concerns, from reflecting on the laſt hours of ſome of my departed friends and acquaintance: my enquiry concerning them has always been, not how much they died worth, (which is the uſual queſtion) but what *ſentiments* they appeared to have, when they were juſt launching into eternity.

M. You have been an eye-witneſs of the behaviour of many.

T. Our latter hours have generally a great affinity with the ordinary courſe of our days: as we *believe* and *live*, ſo for the moſt part we die, with a greater or leſs mixture of fear or hope. I could tell thee tales, my daughter, which would chill thy young blood, or make it fly ſo quickly to thy heart, as would leave thy cheeks pale as the lifeleſs corpſe. I have likewiſe been witneſs to ſome ſcenes of departing ſouls which would diffuſe a genial warmth throughout thy frame, and inſpire thee with joy, far beyond the livelieſt ſcenes of feſtivity!

M. Both may have a good effect on my mind.

T. The conſideration of the departure of the righteous

will excite earneſt wiſhes and endeavours, that thy end may be like theirs: while the ſad *finiſhing ſcene* of the wicked ſhall teach thee to flee from vice.

Thou remembereſt *Jonathan*, that miſerable man, who appeared to have no fear of God before his eyes. He regarded not the inconveniencies and difficulties which he brought on others, provided he could ſatisfy his own wants, and and gratify his appetites. Though there was nothing ſoft in his ſpeech to *deceive*, yet he had ſo much *cunning*, that he impoſed upon many: he had wit in deſigning, and reſolution in executing his projects; and ſo much ſkill in evading law, that he often baffled the attempts of his neighbours to reſtrain him: But in the midſt of his career, he was brought to his death-bed. In this ſituation he did not ſeem to feel any remorſe for the paſt, nor any dread of the future.

M. Had he no fear of the puniſhment appointed for the wicked?

T. He had deſtroyed the natural ſuggeſtions of conſcience, by an habitual courſe of ſin; till at length he acquired ſuch a degree of obſtinacy and blindneſs, that it ſeemed as if he could not diſcover himſelf to be in any danger: but *conviction* muſt come at laſt; and if the guilty do not feel it here, the more miſerable they will be hereafter.

M. What a dreadful ſituation was this! O unhappy *Jonathan!*

Death of a reprobate become penitent.

T. Thou kneweſt *Richard* too, *Jonathan*'s friend, they run together the ſame courſe; and he too, for a time, followed all the deſires of his heart, but he was not ſo obſtinate and opinionated. His conſcience ſmote him; he was oppreſſed, and exceedingly ſorrowful: when he fell ill, I ſaw his diſtreſs upon his countenance, and aſked him the reaſon of his ſadneſs: I ſhall never forget his anſwer. He ſaid, "Alas! my Friend, the ſoul is a moſt "important ſerious thing; I have neglected the care of "mine. I *feel* it now, and far better it is to feel it here, "than languiſh in miſery for ever!" I have reaſon to believe that *Richard* died a penitent.

M. You are always ready, my Father, to do good offices

to

to others, even at the verge of the grave: I remember your going to ſee *young Peter* in his laſt illneſs: what was his behaviour?

A careleſs liver on his death-bed.

T. Peter was a lad of lively parts, and of a promiſing capacity. He was active and laborious in whatever he undertook; his great blemiſh was *inconſtancy, diſregard to truth*, and the modern careleſs way of living. Convinced of his folly and guilt, his anguiſh burſt forth at the approach of death; and at the very time I was preſent he ſaid, "Good God, what have I been doing, and "whither am I going?"

M. Theſe were good beginnings, and afforded you a fair opportunity of giving him advice: did he ſend for the miniſter of our pariſh?

T. Yes: and according to his conſtant cuſtom, he as readily came: the neglect in this inſtance is generally owing to the ſick perſons themſelves, or to their friends, who conſider the miniſter as the fore-runner of death, and ſeldom require his aſſiſtance, till the ſick man has loſt the power of diſcourſing or praying. I have reaſon to believe Peter made his peace with God.—Doſt thou remember young 'Squire William?

M. O, very well!

Early death of a young gentleman penitent.

T. When he found his health declining, he began to prepare for another ſtate, and deſired the aſſiſtance of a reverend gentleman for that purpoſe, with whom he had many ſerious converſations upon the nature of repentance; the certainty of rewards and puniſhments; and the happy means of attaining the bliſs which God hath promiſed in his goſpel to thoſe who obey his laws. This pious and friendly intercourſe was attended with many happy conſequences with regard to his patience, reſignation, and contrition. Toward the end of his life, his father came to viſit him. The good old man was in great affliction, and the young gentleman looking at him, with tears in his eyes, ſaid, 'Weep not, my Father; you have ever been kind to me; but contrary to *your* intention, I made a bad uſe of your kindneſs: let not your ſorrow add to my preſent diſtreſs!—The ample ſupply you gave me, has been employed

in

in feeding my paſſions, and gratifying my appetites. Would to God I could live over again the few paſt years of my life; but this is a *vain*, perhaps an unbecoming wiſh!——God knows my heart; and I have the deepeſt ſenſe of his mercy! —I embrace the terms which he has offered to ſinners! I ſincerely repent of my ſins, and truſt in the mediation of Chriſt, that my repentance will be accepted——My days of lawleſs pleaſure now are gone; they are waſted; they are paſſed away: but the remembrance of them ſtings me me to the heart. I look back with *horror!*—but God, who knows my guilt, has ſeen my ſorrows!—He who ſcans the heart of man, and weighs his inmoſt thoughts, beholds my contrition! Could I convey to their knowledge one half the ſad ſtory of my conſcious guilt, and the griefs which wring my ſoul, angels and men would pity my diſtreſs! My time grows ſhort—but I am *ready!*—my doubts and anxious fears are ceaſed!—I truſt that my pardon is ſealed. I hope for forgiveneſs at the hands of God, though I have ſo grievouſly offended him. O my Father, let your prayers be offered at the throne of God in my behalf! You, whoſe tenderneſs I have experienced from my birth, even to this hour, happy ſhould I have been, could I have made your old age'—— My dear *Mary*, thou changeſt colour!—Why doſt thou look ſo pale?—

M. Don't be ſurprized: I am much grieved to think of the death of ſo young a man: He was led aſtray; had he recovered his health, he might have proved himſelf worthy the eſteem of all mankind. I remember him well: I believe I was near ten years of age when he died. Oft as I met him when I paſſed over the lawn to ſchool, he aſked me kindly concerning my health, my improvement in reading and working; and if I could ſay my prayers. He conſtantly enquired after you: He called you his *friend*, and deſired in the kindeſt manner to be remembered to you. Thoſe new ſix-pences which now lie wrapped up in my box, you may remember were his preſents to me. I thought him a good young gentleman: I was pleaſed with his notice of me; my little heart was full of wiſhes for his happineſs: Surely he could not be a hardened ſinner; he was mild and generous!

T. He was indeed a youth of expectation; of a noble, friendly, and humane diſpoſition, with an excellent underſtanding; but too large an allowance, owing to an imprudent indulgence on the part of his father, inſtead of keeping him out of vicious company, carried him into it; and the tenderneſs of his nature became a ſnare to his innocence. The true principles of religion had not been ſufficiently inſtilled into his tender mind, to guard him from *vice*; and he died a victim to it at twenty-one years of age. He died however in a happy chriſtian ſtate of mind; he died repenting; not that he could ſin no longer, but that he had ſinned ſo long: he departed in a ſteady hope and expectation of being received into that happy place, where ſin and ſorrow cannot enter!

M. There was another gentleman in this neighbourhood, whoſe name I have forgotten, who the country ſaid was a penitent alſo, but under very different circumſtances.

Death of a modern politician.

T. I believe you mean Sir *Benjamin:* his footman told me what his maſter ſaid to his friends, after his phyſicians had pronounced him to be paſt hope: "You have heard," ſaid he, "that my life is "deſpaired of, and I believe I ſhall die in a very few days. O Death, what art thou?—the Lord have mercy on my ſoul! I have lived to be juſt turned of half a hundred, and a conceited noiſy man I have been, particularly ſince I became poſſeſſed of a large fortune. What I wanted in piety to God, and in charity to my neighbour, I attempted to ſupply by a preſumptuous confidence in my wealth. It is the weakneſs and ſervility of mankind, and perhaps it predominates moſt in a free commercial country, to ſhew a peculiar indulgence to men who are eſteemed rich, whatever they may be in other reſpects. I took this advantage, and have acted boldly without reſolution, and ſeemingly determined, even when I knew not what my real object was. I have aſked what I did not deſire to obtain, and ſollicited for that, the granting of which had probably involved me in great difficulties. The native imperiouſneſs of my temper has been increaſed by habit, and my ruling paſſion and

thirſt of applauſe, by the flattery of thoſe who fooliſhly imagined they ſhould come in for a ſhare of my imaginary glory. In my turn I have offered the meaneſt praiſes to my inferiors; and the more they have flattered me, the greater folly I have committed. If my conſcience had not thwarted me, and my ſecret fears reſtrained me, I know not where I ſhould have ſtopt. I endeavoured to propagate a belief that our government was tyrannical; whilſt the prudence and lenity, the candour and forbearance which I experienced, ſecretly put me to the bluſh: and yet, ſtrange to tell, I did not deſiſt. I took *all* occaſions to ſow diſcontent and promote diſcord; knowing at the ſame time that no government can be eſtabliſhed on ſuch terms; and that ſuch *example* muſt operate to the diſſolution of the whole fabrick. The complex frame of our conſtitution is of ſuch a nature, that no one can *govern* by his own will and inclination. The doing *evil*, with a view to the good which may come from it, whether in office or out, is a falſe maxim. Rectitude of will is the firſt conſideration; though it may ſeem not to avail in all caſes. I made no allowance for others; not even for the imperfections inſeparable from all human affairs. On the contrary, I ſtrove to aggravate every blemiſh, and to impute crimes, where I knew there were none. I thank God that his providence has preſerved us; and if any good comes from my conduct, that he has converted the *evil* I have committed, into *good*. What other ſatisfaction can I now make you?—Alas, my friends, this is a language which you will hardly hear in the warmth of debate, or the diſſipation of a banquet: but *death* undraws the curtain, and expoſes the hidden things of the heart. O vanity! O wealth! what are ye, why have ye deceived me? Had I been poor, I might have been humble, and my humility would have ſhewn me things in the calmer lights of mild philoſophy and chriſtian meekneſs. Would this have rendered me more penetrable to the arts of corruption? No, ſurely; that which beſt ſecures our innocence, cannot at the ſame time tempt us to guilt. I ſhould have been more independent, becauſe more free: I ſhould have wept at the party prejudices, and the caprice of others, which

could

could not be removed, never employing any bad means to accompliſh good purpoſes; nor under a diſſembled love of virtue, have attempted to deſtroy them, whom I knew were labouring to preſerve their country. To ſay it is the cuſtom of our nation to act thus, and that there is at this time much to be corrected, is ſaying nothing in excuſe with regard to my own want of charity and uprightneſs. Had the true honour and glory of my country been my firſt object, I ſhould have been temperate: reaſon demands a patient ear, and the dignity acquired by liſtening to her voice, even in the extremity of juſt reſentments, ſupports the character of the patriot and the chriſtian, the friend of his country and of human kind!—O God, forgive my offences, and remove the guilt which now oppreſſes my ſoul! I hope he will inſpire your hearts with ſuch wiſdom, as may enable you to conſider *popular applauſe*, in this country, as the fancy of the day, often beſtowed on the very worſt of men. Thoſe who court it, muſt appear, in the eye of the diſcerning world, as vain-glorious, turbulent, and weak. You will always find, that where there is the moſt *ſound*, there is the leaſt *ſenſe*; and that ſuch applauſe is no *criterion* of the ſentiments of a nation. If I am worthy to adviſe you, let one ſelf-approving hour, ſupported by the teſtimony of a good conſcience, be more valuable in your eſteem than the ſhouts of the people! The trueſt expreſſion of regard for the populace is to give them the higheſt impreſſions of government, when they are not injured; and to repreſent their grievances with decency and candor when they are. This is the way to govern them happily!

Indiſcriminate, and unjuſt reproaches of men in office, lay waſte all confidence. Such conduct is as dangerous as the moſt ſervile flattery, which can be offered at the feet of tyranny and oppreſſion. Inſolence and adulation are equally productive of violence and diſtreſs.

You will grant, that I have gone greater lengths than any man of my time!—it was not becauſe I had the beſt parts, or the moſt courage, but the moſt preſumption and the moſt confidence in being ſupported. I had no deſign to hazard my perſon or fortune: if I acted as if I wiſhed to

overturn the conſtitution of my country, I did not mean it; for I knew not how my great property could be ſo well ſecured to me; nor how it is poſſible to form any *practicable* ſyſtem half ſo good. I have often ſaid, that the vital principles of it were totally worn out: it ſuited my purpoſe to ſay ſo, but I did not think it: I believe you and your children will enjoy many happy days under its benignant influence.

Hurried on by an exceſs of vanity, under a pretence to *independency*, I became the tool of a boiſterous mob, whom I durſt not diſoblige, leſt all my mock grandeur ſhould ſuddenly diſſolve: I reſted my cauſe on the iſſue of their approbation, and might have eaſily become a ſacrifice to their reſentments.——The thirſt of dominion, and the pride of conqueſt is inherent in the human ſoul; but individuals as well as nations, have been frequently undone by their victories: I believe mine would have coſt me very dear——

Alas, my friends, the *times* are pregnant with faults! We are as naturally querilous, as we are generous and bold; but we aſpire at more than Providence ſeems to allow to mortals; and our appetites increaſing with our enjoyments, we grow diſſatisfied with indulgence. Great expenſiveneſs in living, and ſtraining the ſinews of property, put invention on the rack for a ſupply. How often have we ſeen the barriers of moral obligations broken down, to get at the means of ſatisfying our wants. How many, under the pretence of patriotiſm, have endeavoured to ſap the foundations of authority, and hazard the throwing down the whole fabric of government!

We are born with the ſeeds of our mortality, which gradually produce our *natural* diſſolution: The contempt of authority, is the ſource of *political* diſſolution; for in proportion as ſuch contempt is diffuſed through a nation, it will as ſurely create a malady in the ſtate, as exceſs or intemperance produce the diſeaſes in the natural body which accelerate death. Had I acted with temperance and moderation, the love of God and my country might have operated in my heart with united force as one motive: but alas, religion had no ſhare in my politics!

What

What the world will ſay of me, is of little moment: but you are witneſſes to what I ſay of myſelf, when the ſecrets of man's heart fall from his tongue.—Hiſtorians will report me differently, as their own paſſions, and the lights which they receive, may direct them. The moſt candid and judicious will weigh the principles and motives of my actions, and examine what portion of *good* could poſſibly come from them!—I leave the world with ſorrow, for the corruption of manners in which others are involved, as well as myſelf. The infidelity that reigns amongſt us, and the unmanly diſſipation which prevails, equally obſtruct *political* and *moral* virtues. And now that the miſt of party prejudices is diſpelled, and I behold things as they are; be witneſs, that with my lateſt breath I pray to the almighty Ruler of the world, *O ſave my country!*—though it ſhould be by the inſtrumentality of men, whoſe rank and dignity I have vilified; whoſe reputation I have defamed; and who I have perſecuted with the uſual rage of party conflicts!

I am now going off the theatre of this vain world, to appear in a far different ſcene, where *truth*, arrayed in all the ſplendor of omnipotence; and *juſtice*, clothed in awful majeſty, ſit enthron'd!—O almighty God, forgive my offences, and let the *influence* of thy compaſſion cheer my trembling ſoul!—My friends, farewell!—Leave me with that reverend gentleman (pointing to his chaplain) and my own meditations; that we may ſeek, if amidſt the mighty ſtores in heaven, any comfort can be found for me." Here he ended his ſpeech and confeſſion to thoſe who attended on his bed.

M. Did this poor gentleman, whoſe head was ſo full of *politics*, die ſo ſoon as he imagained he ſhould?—And was his conduct really as faulty, as himſelf repreſented it to be?

T. He died in a very few days after. As to the nature of his offences towards the public, we are not to ſuppoſe that he intended to aggravate it; a conſciouſneſs of guilt, with regard to the general tenor of his life, might indeed add to the ſtings which he felt; but truth and juſtice are due to the higheſt, as well as the loweſt; and reſpect to authority is eſſential to the very exiſtence of government and the

happineſs of ſociety; as he knew, therefore, in his own heart that he had treſpaſſed, it is not wonderful that he ſhould make this confeſſion, and give this relief to his mind.

M. Do all *politicians* in this nation, occaſionally act the ſame part, as to the offence, or the confeſſion?

T. Few ſee things in this light; and I hope few err ſo much; but I will tell thee more of that matter at ſome other time. Let us not break the thread of our diſcourſe.—

Declaration of a ſtateſman on his death-bed.

I have often heard my maſter talk of a certain great and good man, who had been employed in many high offices, and made a conſiderable figure in the world. In his laſt hours *he* ſaid, 'After ſo many years experience in buſineſs, noiſe, and ſplendor, I am convinced that the greateſt wiſdom is ſerioufneſs; the beſt phyſic, temperance; and the beſt eſtate, a good conſcience,' declaring, that were he to live over again the time he had ſpent in the world, he would prefer retirement to the court, and the chapel to the palace; adding theſe words, 'Now all things forſake me, except my God, my duty, and my prayer!'

M. Reſolutions and promiſes extorted by ſickneſs, and the ſight of danger, are not always to be depended on; but this gentleman was of a very different turn from Sir *Benjamin.*

T. Judge on the fair ſide of the queſtion; it is plain in what light the *ſhortneſs* and vanity of life appeared to him, as it does to other men, who have lived long and are wiſe. They know how much better it is to ſet the heart, in our earlieſt days, upon the pleaſures which are *laſting*, than upon the periſhing enjoyments of this world!—How many are

Death and confeſſion of a duelliſt.

the roads by which we journey into that country whence no traveller returns!—The other day, an officer of the greateſt bravery, and a moſt valuable man, died of a wound received in a *duel!*

M. A duel!—I have heard of this kind of fighting; but I thought we were grown wiſe, and that it was *out of faſhion.*

T. This gentleman, who reaſoned like a man of *honour* when he was in a whole ſkin, after he had received a mortal wound found out that he had acted like a madman or a fool, though his madneſs and folly are wonderfully pitiable!

M. What

M. What did he ſay on his death-bed? A perſon of ſuch a character as you repreſent him, whether anxious about living or not, muſt have ſhed many a bitter tear, from the conſciouſneſs of his guilt.

T. According to the account given by the ſurgeon, after his wound was dreſt, he lay compoſed for a few minutes, and then burſt into this exclamation, "Good God! what have I been about?—Look down in mercy on me, who have ſo ſtrangely abuſed thy bleſſings!—What a ſlave have I been to the tyranny of the world,—the indigeſted opinion of the few who are guided only by cuſtom! That brave men ſhould be ſuch dupes, againſt the cleareſt conviction of their moral and religious duties, and like boys at ſchool, fight for no better reaſon than that of being challenged! Shall I *curſe* the practice, which robs ſo many of their lives, in the ſame breath with which I implore mercy for myſelf? Yet *curſed*, thrice curſed muſt that cuſtom be, which draws ſuch bitter tears of conſcious guilt, as now ſtream from my heart, together with my blood; and while my life ebbs out, dries up the channels of all heavenly comfort!—— That the action which ought to be branded with infamy, as highly offenſive to *God*, ſhould be ſtamped with a mark of honour as acceptable to *men*, *profeſſing* themſelves *chriſtians!* and that men of underſtanding ſhould court the countenance of thoſe who judge ſo ill, as to leave out the conſideration of the firſt great principle, the *immortality of the ſoul!*—horrible it is to think of, with regard to others; to myſelf, it is now terrible beyond expreſſion!

If I could flatter myſelf that my ſad fate would ſerve as an example, ſome rays of comfort would break in upon my ſoul, as if Providence had intended a great event by my confeſſion; and I might die in the comfortable expectation, that hereafter men would act up to the principles of their religion!——But this I fear will not happen! What *can* I plead in *my own defence?* It is but a poor excuſe that my adverſary was ſo raſh and ill-adviſed, as to provoke me to the trial, whether I ſhould take *his* life, or he *mine*. By accepting his challenge, I deceived him into an opinion that I ſubſcribed to his principle, though it hath long appeared

to

to me as a mere phantom, the offspring of pride and folly! —But here my ſad ſtory begins:—Had I *bravely* avowed my faith and principles, I muſt have appeared as declining the combat, and conſequently offered violence to my *pride*, in ſubjecting myſelf to the imputation of *cowardice*.——O how inconſiſtent are the thoughts of man, when his paſſions dictate to him!—I was the *aggreſſor*; and although I deemed my fault but trivial, yet conſcious of my error, I hazarded my life, determined to do no more than *defend myſelf*. The combat thus became unequal, and I am *ſlain!* Perhaps, if I had thrown my arms acroſs, and bid him kill me for the offence, if I could make him no other ſatisfaction, I might have ſaved my *honour* with the world: I might have prevented this murder! Cowards have often *fought*; cowards have *conquered*; but cowards are ſtill afraid of expoſing themſelves to death! Had he taken the advantage, I might have been deemed a *generous fool*, but he muſt have been a *murderer!*— Oft have I ſtood reſigned to Providence, liſtening with eagerneſs for the word, to *attack* the fierceſt ranks, when the loud cannon fill'd heaven's high vault, and many a brave man's blood was ſpilt! Then it was my duty; then it was my office to follow my leader, and obey command. But now I have acted *againſt* my duty. Had I been faithful to my God, my country, and myſelf, I ſhould not have been involved in this diſtreſs! The tender father of mankind does not exact ſo rigorous a ſacrifice for *idle words!* But proud and ſinful men, regardleſs of the event, have found out many ſtrange inventions to torture and oppreſs, and even to drive each other into everlaſting perdition! O may it pleaſe heaven to inſpire the hearts of princes (the ſprings of worldly honours) to give nothing the *name of honour*, which the laws of God forbid; and let them brand this practice with a mark of diſgrace and infamy! Can *they* expect bleſſings at the hands of God, who connive at a practice ſo repugnant to his laws? If it is their opinion that it ſerves to promote *decorum*, or national bravery, when it is really an inſtrument in the hands of the prince of darkneſs, to work the deſtruction of thoſe, who are oftentimes as generous and brave as

they

they are rash and irreligious; will not their blood be required at the hands of them who bear the sword of justice and mercy, for the government of mankind?—Perhaps I have deserved to meet an *untimely death:* the many offences which I know I have *committed*, and the many which have passed *unheeded by*, may have deserved *this punishment*; and I ought not to complain of my sentence!—Thy councils, O God, are inscrutible!—Yet to die in this *foolish*, *wicked* manner, adding to my sins the crime of rushing into the presence of God, at the instigation of that evil spirit which is at enmity with him!—O horrible to the imagination!—O God, forgive the deluded, miserable sinner that I am! Forgive my strange, amazing inconsistency! It was not that I disbelieved thy word, or defied thy vengeance! It was my *pride* and folly!—O my friends! it is but a few minutes and I must leave you! leave you *for ever!*—I must leave my country, which requires my service—I must leave—*O heart-bleeding thought*, my much-lov'd *wife* and *children!*—Shield them, *O God*, from *harm!* Let them not suffer for *my sins!*—Where does my agonizing fancy wander!—What have I to do with *this* world, where I have acted my part so ill, in this last, last, sad scene! Shall I be rejected by the *good* and *just?* O God, *hear their prayers for me!*—Can I ask mercy for myself, hurried as I am, like a criminal taken in the full commission of the fact, to the dread tribunal of my tremendous Judge, with all my sins and imperfections on my head!"—Here he paused for some time, and his friends bid him be comforted, alledging that he had no design but to defend himself.—To which he answered, "True: but I hazarded the event—and the sad consequence proves that I invaded the province of heaven as to life or death! I have ever endeavoured to acquit myself as a loyal subject, and a faithful servant to the king, my master; nor less to thee, *O God*, the King of Kings, and sovereign Lord of all! O pardon my *rebellion*, ungrateful, thoughtless rebellion against thee, at whose hands I received the breath I draw, and all the comforts and the joys my heart could wish." Turning again to his friends, he said, "Do not flatter me; I appeal to you: Have I not *sacrificed* all this to maintain the *opinion of bravery*,

whilſt I have *acted* really as an acceſſary to the *murder* of myſelf?—O crime againſt nature, and againſt nature's God! But thou, O Father Almighty—thou art *merciful*—thy compaſſion is far beyond the reach of ſinful man to fathom!—I have made a play-game of the ſacred truſt committed to my care, my life, my reaſon, and the brightneſs of thy goſpel! I have at length laid out my talents very ill indeed: but thou knoweſt my heart, and all its imperfections!—O forgive—forgive."——Here he pauſed again for ſome time, ſeeming to be almoſt exhauſted, and afforded an opportunity to his weeping friends, who had liſtened, as performing their laſt mournful reſpects, to beg him to be compoſed. "Alas," replied he, "what will *compoſure* avail? I cannot be compoſed!——Whilſt any breath remains, let me *accuſe* myſelf, and reſt my cauſe upon the mercy of my Judge! Where elſe can I ſeek for mercy?—I forgive all *others* their treſpaſſes againſt *me*, as I hope God will forgive *my offences againſt him*.——O may my raſh adverſary live and repent; and die a happy death!—*He* will go about his affairs of *life:* I am haſtening to death, now trembling on the dreadful verge of eternity! No further time permitted to *try* the ſincerity of my heart!—O merciful God, ſend me thy comfort from above! Let the rays of thy mercy ſhine upon me, and calm the troubles of my mind! Let thy blood, *O bleſſed Jeſus*, which was ſhed for thine enemies, waſh away my ſtains. Though I have thus violated thy laws, my heart bleeds for the offence! O thou eternal Judge of men, intercede for me at the throne of mercy! Accept the humiliation of my heart, the only ſacrifice I now can make!—And let thy blood, ſpilt by the unrighteous hands of blind and ſelf-deluded ſinners, cleanſe me from my *blood guiltineſs*, O Lord! O Chriſt, thou great Redeemer of mankind, forſake me not in this my ſad extremity! Let me graſp thy feet, and waſh them with my tears. Hear my mournful prayer! O hear me, and have mercy on me!—Let my ſad example be a light to guide unwary preſumptuous men; that knowing my *repentance*, they may ſhun my offence! Thy law hath been in my heart, though I have now ſwerved from it in ſo *hateful* a manner!" Then lowering his voice, he ſaid, "O my

my Father and my God!"—then breaking off, and looking towards the ſurgeon with eyes which at once beſpoke the *ſorrowful ſinner* and the *zealous ſaint*, he ſaid, "I feel death—O God receive my departing ſoul!" and expired.

M. My Father, forgive me if I *weep*——Methinks I have heard this poor gentleman's ſad tale, as if from his own mouth; and that I now ſee his mournful wife and children drowned in their tears!—Do you not think he died moſt penitently?

T. I hope all the *repentance* he was capable of, in ſo ſhort a time, was performed.

M. Are the generality of duelliſts, who ſeem ſo little to regard the chriſtian religion, or the laws of the land, before they engage, inclined to think more favourably of them after they have received a mortal wound?

T. I told thee this gentleman was a *man of virtue:* but I preſume that many others have condemned themſelves, more than is commonly known; for the pride of their hearts interpoſes, even in death; and thou mayſt be aſſured, that *pride* is at the bottom of this *evil*; for at the very moment that theſe *mighty heroes*, whoſe object is *glory* and *fame*, engage in combat, they have not wit enough to ſee themſelves ſervile dupes, and inglorious ſlaves to the abſurd irreligious opinions of the ſilly thoughtleſs multitude! And it ſeems to be a worſe evil thus to lick the duſt off the feet of a number of fools, than to pay homage to a ſingle idiot.

This practice is deſtructive of all ſociety; for if we forſake both divine and human laws, and undertake to judge for ourſelves, on every ſuch occaſion as uſually gives riſe to duels, inſtead of rational beings aſſociated for each others protection and happineſs, both in this, and the world of ſpirits, a nation would become a *banditti*, or company of *murderers*, not pleading neceſſity, as when men rob, but acting from a wantonneſs of pride and *cruelty*, deſtroying preſent comfort, and all future hope!

M. Surely our reaſon is a mere chimæra and our religion a fable, or duelling is a *damnable ſin!* Is no man hanged for putting another in fear of his life, neither for actually ſlaying of him in a duel?

T. I never could underſtand how magiſtrates can be ſaid to act up to the ſpirit or letter of the *chriſtian* religion, or the laws of the land, in this inſtance; for no one ſeems afraid of being hanged, provided *he kills his man* in what is called a *fair duel:* But the phraſe is abſurd, and argues a colluſion at the practice. We had better excuſe a highway-man who *robs*, becauſe he is afraid he ſhall be *ſtarved*, provided he does not *murder*, than a duelliſt, who is only afraid of his *reputation*, and kills his adverſary in a duel.

M. What is meant by a fair duel?

T. Why, ſo many yards of ground is meaſured out by two friends of the combatants, who uſually attend, one on each ſide; and they are to ſee that the piſtols are properly loaded with ball.

M. What, ſuch balls as will give a mortal wound?

T. Yes: this is the *tender and affectionate part which their very kind and good friends are to act.* I have heard it ſaid that they muſt not bring more than two piſtols and a ſword, to make *fair play.*

M. Why not two ſwords and one piſtol, or three piſtols; or to make ſurer work, a carbine?

T. This, it ſeems, would not be fair; ſo that this mutual murderous adventure hath received certain laws from cuſtom.

M. How is it underſtood to be fair, when one man knows the uſe of a ſword or piſtol, and another has no knowledge of either?

T. Why one is a greater fool than the other: queſtion me no farther, I pray, for the whole is a jumble of *knight-errantry* and *folly*; for till it can be proved to be a fair deed for a man to offend againſt the laws of God and his country, in the way that his paſſions ſuggeſt to him, duelling muſt be conſidered as a *foul deed!*—It is deemed ſo foul in ſome countries *(a)*, that the man who is killed, is dragged naked through the ſtreets, tied to a horſe's tail, and the ſlayer ſurely ſuffers death by the laws. Other nations alſo are ſevere in this inſtance; the Royal clemency being moſt diſtinguiſhed by putting a ſtop to ſuch a wantonneſs of private vin-

(a) Ruſſia.

vindictive juſtice. Were we to preſerve the dignity and authority of the laws, and guard the ſacred boundaries of religion, we ſhould ſoon feel the benefit in many other inſtances: but if magiſtrates do not hold out the terror of the laws, and convince offenders that *they* muſt ſuffer, *themſelves* become acceſſaries to the murder; the evil will ſtill prevail, and may one day become a formidable ſcourge from heaven.

To give thee an idea of the ſavage brutality of this cuſtom among theſe *honourable* gentlemen, I remember a duel fought five-and-thirty years ago, between a young officer and a gentleman; the ſword of the gentleman happening to break, the parties were ſeparated, and this was deemed a deciſion, to their mutual honour: but unluckily they lodged in the ſame houſe; and the next morning, as ſoon as the day broke, the officer inſiſted on a renewal of the combat; to which the gentleman objected: words enſuing, the miſtreſs of the houſe ſent for a conſtable; but he not coming in time, the parties iſſued forth: one *borrowed* a ſword, and the other *bought* one; and after walking from a place called *Charing-croſs* to *Kenſington*, which is above two miles, to it they went. The gentleman received a ſlight ſcratch in his breaſt; the officer, a mortal wound in his body, of which he inſtantly expired with theſe ſad words in his mouth, *D—n your blood, you have killed me; make off.* The gentleman did not attempt to fly, but was immediately committed to priſon.

M. Good God! what an end was here! Was the gentleman hanged?

T. Hanged, child, why I tell thee there is no ſuch thing; and yet in the eye of reaſon, this gentleman might as well have killed a lunatic juſt eſcaped from Bedlam, as this mad young officer.

M. How does this practice affect *us* in *humble life?*

T. It certainly ſhews a ſad example of the deviliſh principle of *pride*, *revenge*, and *cruelty*, which ſometimes operate among the unlettered, in a more dreadful manner, if poſſible, than even by *duelling*—As to *women*, they are moſt inclined to *murder* each others reputation; and yet there are, I believe, more women of *honour*, as to the great article of

chaſtity, on chriſtian principles, than men of *honour* with regard to the anti-chriſtian principle of this lawleſs uſe of the ſword.

M. Let us change to ſome other ſubject. Who do you recollect within the circle of our own acquaintance of a diſtinguiſhed character?

Death of a libertine in a middle ſtation.

T. I am not ſure whether thou remembereſt *Nicholas*; or if thou wilt think his character extraordinary: he maintained a kind of reputation in the world among a certain claſs of people, who were not very exact livers themſelves; but he was much addicted to pleaſure and ſenſual gratifications forbidden by the *law of Chriſt*. He did not underſtand much of any ſuch law, for he ſcarce ever looked into the ſacred writings which contain it; and if he occaſionally went to church, it was rather in compliance with cuſtom, than with a ſpirit of humility to receive inſtruction; and I do not recollect that I ever ſaw him partake of the Lord's Supper.

M. The world may ſhew what quarter it pleaſes; but can ſuch perſons be *properly* called *chriſtians?* Is not the ſacred title *miſapplied?*

T. I am afraid that he, poor man, had no juſt claim to it, either in the courſe of his life or at his death. In his laſt illneſs, he ſeemed much confuſed in thought, and wrapped in gloom and melancholy. Some expreſſions of fear of an avenging judge dropt from him, but he gave no ſign of any comfortable expectation or truſt in the blood of a Redeemer.

M. Alas! what a ſad condition are they in who live in the forgetfulneſs of God, who is the only ſpring of comfort and joy: What a wretched caſe, to paſs their days regardleſs of a Saviour, by whom we are enabled to overcome death, and riſe to life immortal!

T. Thy queſtion, my dear *Mary*, makes my heart bleed! When I conſider what numbers are purſuing this unhappy courſe, and treaſuring up to themſelves the vengeance of heaven, I tremble!

M. You was acquainted with Sir *Ralph*'s butler, and muſt have heard the particulars of his maſter's death—Sir *Ralph* was eſteemed a man of virtue.

T. I understood, that a few months before he died, he desired the reverend minister to collect passages out of the sacred writings, on the plainest and most exact way of making his peace with God; observing, with a sigh, *how few men consider to what end they are born into the world, till they are near the time of leaving it.* Sir *Ralph* had many virtues, but thou seest how miserably *poor* he was with all his *wealth*: and how *ignorant*, with all his *learning!* *Death of a gentleman of figure.*

M. Is it possible so great a man could be ignorant in so very material and interesting a concern?

T. How could it be otherwise? can the most ingenious watchmaker make me a pair of shoes so well as our neighbour *James*; or *James* know how to plough and sow so well as myself? The science and business which people have not been used to think of, or never to apply themselves to, they cannot enter into the spirit of it. And this is the case of too many among the *great*, as well as *little*, in regard to religion. His acquaintance, the generous Sir *George Freeman*, had read the scriptures with care and attention, and therefore was at no such loss: With his last breath, he spoke to his friends these memorable words, *Alas, my friends, the most valuable bequest I can make to you, is my entreaty that you will govern your conduct and affections by the will and word of God. I have lived in what is called the highest part of life, yet in me you may behold the end of this world, and all its vanities; to me they are now passing away like a shadow! I repent of all my life, but that part of it which I spent in communion with God, and in doing good!* *Death of a pious courtier.*

M. He was a courtier, it seems; was he, notwithstanding, reputed a *good man?*

T. Why? dost thou imagine that courts are so much worse than other places? Office is apt to make men insolent; and there are but few who are much exalted, and yet enjoy all the virtues of an humble condition; if thou wouldst consider that the *place* can honour them only as they do honour to the place, by discharging the duties of it; and that it is always a duty to be humane, thou wouldst never object to a courtier, merely on account *Reflections on courts and office.*

account of any office he may fill, as the prejudices of foolish people make them imagine, for it cannot be supposed that any such office is in itself dishonourable.

M. But do not people at court frequently wear *two faces?*

T. It would be happy if masks were worn only by such courtiers as disguise their thoughts; for though I fear that religion is often made subservient to worldly ends, this is no more the case at courts than in other places; and neither rulers nor people can flourish where their morals and manners are corrupted. "If we take away the real awe of *religion*, all the fidelity and justice necessary to the maintenance of human society, will soon perish, and the whole political frame be dissolved."

M. Do you think then, that those who are in office have more virtue than those that are out?

T. If office spoiled the morals of all men, there could be no such thing as virtue or justice in any government; but so long as we see things hold together, and that authority and power try men's virtue, we may rather suppose that men in office have the most virtue. I know that the contrary is vulgarly imagined; for public censure taking in very little of what is passing in *private life*, all the *satire* unavoidably falls on *men in office*.

Death of a dissolute young man.

M. Pray tell me how did *Stephen* take his leave of the world?

T. He was a remarkable instance of carelessness. Thinking him to be on his death-bed, I visited him, and asked him *if he thought of God?* I am shock'd when I recollect his answer: *Oh*, says he, *it is not come to that yet.*

M. He flattered himself, I suppose, with a continuance in life, and was for putting off the *evil hour of repentance* (as it is often called) as long as he could.

T. That was the case: but how mad is it to trust a business of such importance to that precarious hour? And how weak and foolish was it to imagine, that *one Lord have mercy on me*, when his breath was departing from him, would avail; and yet this man had been often advised by our worthy curate to read the scriptures, to pray, and amend his life!

M. Sad end indeed! my blood runs cold when I think of such

ſuch careleſs people, whoſe indifference would make one imagine they had no apprehenſions of a judgment to come.

T. Much happier was the late untimely death of a poor boy, who fell moſt unexpectedly! It was a *doleful* accident which happened the other day to dame *Catharine*'s only ſon! He was a fine ſpirited lad, and might have proved a moſt valuable man: his activity occaſioned his death. He went to the 'Squire's horſe-mill to offer his ſervice; and humourouſly rallying the driver for lazineſs, leaped on one of the bars of the mill-poſt as it was working round; and not having *looked before he leaped*, was in an inſtant cruſhed under a beam. His mother being acquainted, came in an agony of grief, and throwing herſelf on the dead body, cried out, *O Jonathan! my ſon, my ſon!*—Thou wert all my hopes of comfort!—Oft haſt thou promiſed me, that whilſt God ſhould give thee life and means to labour, I ſhould never want. O my dear child, my much-lov'd boy, thou art gone from me for ever!

M. This was a melancholy ſcene, and the mother's caſe exceedingly pitiable. What part did you take?

T. She was ſo much agitated, that I feared ſome deadly conſequence. I bid her be comforted, and not deſtroy herſelf with exceſs of paſſion; begging ſhe would leave the body, and do her beſt to conſider that this was *the hand of God*; that the lad's death ſeemed to come as it were by lightening from heaven, whither we might preſume he was gone: the generous diſpoſition which he was of, *ſecuring* to him the rewards of his virtue, as he was no longer in any ſtate of temptation, to depart from it: adding, that I would endeavour to repair her loſs, by being myſelf as a ſon, a brother, or a friend to her. Indeed I knew her to be a good woman; I felt great ſorrow for her diſtreſs, and intended to relieve her.——My laſt words ſeemed to make ſome impreſſion; but whilſt ſhe looked at me with a wild ſurprize, plentiful ſtreams of tears guſhed from her eyes. At length, unable to bear this conflict, ſhe ſwooned; and it was with great difficulty we could bring her to give ſigns of life.

M. Such events ſhould teach us to live prepared for death, and likewiſe not to fix our thoughts too much on the world; ſince

ſince the things of it which we moſt delight in, may be ſo eaſily ſnatched from *us*, or *we* from them! Could there be a caſe more dreadful than this?

T. Yes, my dear *Mary:* what was this, compared to a *battle* by ſea or land, by which ſo many become widows and orphans, and parents lament their ſons. What doſt thou think of a ſingle ball, which may mow down a ſcore or two of men, or mangle their bodies, to render death the more dreadful! yet thou heareſt people talk over their cups, as if war was a very *fine amuſement*; and ſome rejoice at the ſound of the trumpet, or the roaring of cannon.

M. This I believe to be very true; but *evils preſent* generally appear as the worſt; and we can bear *evils paſt*, and *evils to come*, better than we ſupport the preſent calamity. But pray, my Father, what did you intend by ſaying, *you* would be to her as a ſon, what can *you* do to ſerve her?

T. As much as her ſon, he being yet poorer than myſelf; for either by my hand or heart, my own purſe, or by application to others, I hope to obtain ſome relief for her. I have found ſuch wonderful reſources, as hardly to deſpair of any help in a good cauſe! The greateſt part of mankind act as if poverty was *infectious:* and we may devote ſo much time in begging for others, as to become beggars ourſelves; but I, who have conſidered this matter, and ſee what the condition of human life is, eſteem thoſe the true inſtruments of Providence who act as almoners to the *rich* and *happy*, in behalf of the *poor* and *miſerable*.

M. I believe there are but few whoſe fortunes enable them to act as ſuch inſtruments, who are inclined to undertake the office; for the higher the *opulent* are *placed*, the more they are out of the reach of miſery themſelves, and the leſs they know or think of other people's *diſtreſs*.

T. Doſt thou remember *Henry?* He was what is commonly called a *ſober* man; but like the moſt part of the world, unwilling to *think* of *death*.—When he fell ill, he deſired to ſee me.—I went to him, and was hardly ſeated when he began to ſpeak. 'My friend,' ſaid he, 'I am *glad* to ſee you, as you are glad when you can adminiſter to the happineſs of any fellow-creature.'—Here he pauſed, and then proceeded:

ceeded: 'It is in your power to ſerve me in the moſt important inſtance. Pray tell me your thoughts, how I may profit by my preſent ſituation. I have been reputed a *ſober man*, and it is true I am not a *drunkard*; but I have been as careleſs as moſt other people—and now if it does not pleaſe the Almighty to anſwer my prayers, and remove my diſeaſe, I ſhall probably be ſoon numbered with the *dead*, and God knows how ill I am prepared to die!'——I anſwered him by ſaying, that I was much obliged to him for his good opinion; but as I did not think myſelf qualified to give him the advice and aſſiſtance which he ſeemed to think neceſſary to his ſalvation; I begged him to conſider and ſend for the miniſter of the pariſh. He ſtill inſiſted that I ſhould let him know *my thoughts*; earneſtly alledging, that I knew more of him than any clergyman of his acquaintance; and that he did not much like to talk to *ſtrangers*. I rallied him on his notion of *ſtrangers*; and in reply, added, 'if you inſiſt on knowing my opinion, you muſt permit me to ſpeak the language of my heart.' This, he ſaid, was the very thing he deſired: I then proceeded, 'You, my honoured friend, have a plentiful fortune for a perſon in your ſtation, and death is bitter to a man that liveth at reſt in his poſſeſſions, to a man that hath nothing to vex him, but hath proſperity in all things.'—This, however, is not entirely your caſe, you complain of *ſickneſs* and *anxiety*; but if you have been accuſtomed to think of the improvement of your fortune and worldly concerns, as your firſt object, this alone will create ſuch a diſturbance in your boſom, as will render you the more unhappy, now that you think you muſt part with them. If it be ſo, you muſt conſider that men, ten times richer than yourſelf, die in common with others; that the uſe of riches is for the living only; that we cannot buy life, and can live here only a certain time; and in that time we may outlive the reliſh of all that the world can furniſh, could we command a million. After ſuggeſting ſo much, I muſt add, that I do not ſee what uſe it can be of to queſtion you concerning the ſtate of your mind, were you diſpoſed to tell me; but for the very reaſon that you ſay you do not think yourſelf prepared for death,

I preſume you have not attended to all the duties of a *chriſtian*, either in fervent *prayer* or *faith*, in zealous hope, or tender charity, in chriſtian *purity*, or manly *temperance*; in ſuch virtues as theſe you have not been ſo attentive as you ought: theſe are crimes common to us, who juſtly ſtile ourſelves *miſerable ſinners!* As to your diſſolution, my friend, what time can you reckon upon at your age? A year is a conſiderable addition! Who can tell how ſoon you may think that a few days added to your number, will be next to a miracle! But if you aſpire at the *name of a man*, let this be your leaſt concern. Man is *born* to *die!* Endeavour to live as you ought, and leave the duration of life to heaven! I am ſorry you have not had a nobler object for your prayer! If you ſhould not recover, you muſt be ſenſible that it often pleaſes the Almighty to make our lives *ſhort*, in order to make them *good*; and, as the beſt of us, upon the renewal of a leaſe of life, may renew the leaſe of ſin and folly, we ſhould not be anxious about ſo precarious an event, but ſeek a *certain* and permanent good. Submit gracefully to the diſpenſations of Providence; and if you conſider yourſelf as under the protection of God, you will rejoice even in death. The intimations of mortality which you now receive, may be of the higheſt benefit to you, if you graft *piety* on your diſeaſe: if as your life ebbs out, your hopes of happineſs flow in, your ſoul will be invigorated. Whether this *ſickneſs* be intended to prove your *virtue*, or deſigned as a puniſhment for your ſins, in proportion as you amend your life, you may juſtly eſteem yourſelf an object of divine mercy!

Permit me alſo to recommend to you, that whatever you aſk, be in ſubmiſſion to the ſupreme wiſdom of God; and that you do it in full faith and truſt, you ſhall obtain it: I do not mean any enthuſiaſtic preſumption, but a faithful and humble confidence. Keep your mind ſteady in this perſuaſion, and you will think of it with profound humility and hearty repentance. It ſeems to be impoſſible to think of God, and not be anxious to pleaſe him; and when you have reaſon to hope your conduct is acceptable to him, your temper and diſpoſition will be free from peeviſhneſs and embarraſſment, and become gentle and eaſy. We are commanded

to watch and pray, leſt we enter into *temptation*; and it is obvious, that vigilance and activity are as neceſſary with reſpect to the *ſoul*, as induſtry and prudence in which the *body* is concerned. The more earneſt you are in your petitions to God, the more you will confide in him; and the deeper ſenſe you will entertain that you truly receive what is moſt expedient for you, either by ſome peculiar providence which more immediately ſhews the hand of heaven, or by that peace and comfort which the mind feels when it reſts with ſincerity on the mercy of God! This is more eaſy to feel and underſtand, than it is to deſcribe: I hope you are ſenſible of it; and I need not add that *you* ought to loſe no time in the application of all your powers to the practical part.

You, perhaps, have found the effect; though you may not have traced the cauſe. A great part of mankind who are inclined to do the will of God, when they think of their duty, take but little pains to know what his will is; but being well ſatisfied that there is a revelation, they ſit down contented without reading the *New Teſtament* with attention. If you will read this book as you ought, you will find it the readieſt way to accompliſh your good purpoſes.

The moſt obvious truths are oftentimes the leaſt regarded, as if their being plain and level to the common apprehenſion of mankind, therefore rendered them the leſs neceſſary to happineſs. The leſs mindful, or the more defective we are in certain duties, particularly in *prayer*, the *celebration of the Lord's Supper*, *attention to God* and *truſt* in him, the more negligent and defective we become, till at length theſe conſiderations are blotted out, and remain no longer in legible characters on the mind.

How it fares with you in theſe particulars, it is not ſo neceſſary for me to enquire, as they are of the higheſt importance for you to correct, if your heart reproaches you. A day, an hour, of truly rational and religious conduct, is incomparably more valuable than a whole life halting between virtue and vice, wiſdom and folly, without any determinate rule by which the courſe of the thoughts and actions are regulated.

When you conſider yourſelf as a reaſoning and an ac-

countable being, your preſent life of ſo ſhort a duration, and your proſpect of eternity, without end, you will ſtand amazed at your careleſneſs of conduct, with reſpect to your eternal ſtate! The mind is ſo framed, that whatever its favourite object is, it takes deep root in the heart, and from thence the habits of our lives are formed. Where can you appeal, but to your own heart, with regard to the thoughts and habits of your life; there you will find the cauſes of the good or evil which is in you! Inveterate habits of ſin are beautifully deſcribed by the queſtion, *Can the Ethiopian change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots?* Your habits, I believe, are not ſo inveterate, for the very reaſon that you now feel ſo much compunction; yet I preſume you require the utmoſt vigilance and ſtrength which you are maſter of, to correct your omiſſions, or ſuppreſs your actual ſins.

Reaſon is given us to be our guide; and we never exerciſe it ſo well as when we learn the will of God and do it. Yet obvious as this truth is to every man's underſtanding, we know that our paſſions are continually attempting to bribe reaſon to come over to their ſide; and when faith and conſcience do not interpoſe, I need not ſay what the event is. We muſt thank the great Author of nature for ordering things in ſuch a manner, that wickedneſs generally condemns itſelf.

Perhaps it is ſtill more amazing to ſee how defective moſt people are, in the plain and ſimple operations of the mind, with regard to the *attention* of the ſoul to God, and its *truſt* in him. You who are capable of thinking cloſely in other ſtudies, perhaps have been diſſipated in this. You tell your children, *mind your buſineſs——attend to what you are about*—— and it is ſuppoſed that when they do attend, they truſt their labours will be rewarded by the accompliſhment of the end they have in view. And what are we but *grown children?* and perhaps the fewer ideas we have, the more eaſy our work becomes, and ſo far the unlettered have the advantage. Notwithſtanding the falſhood and injuſtice, the fooliſhneſs and incapacity of men, have you not often repoſed a truſt in them? Will you not then truſt in the truth and juſtice, the wiſdom and power of God?

It cannot be leſs obvious to you, that *religion* is difficult only as the mind is diſſipated, or the paſſions oppoſe the dictates of reaſon. Thoſe who act as if piety towards God would come upon their ſouls as hunger or thirſt affect the body, without any labour of thought, have as little *ſenſe*, and probably not ſo much *piety*, as thoſe viſionary devotees, who aſcribe all to a marvellous compulſive agency, and a ſenſible operation of the Spirit of God. You comprehend that what I contend for, is a conſtant *attention* to God, and a ſteady *truſt* in him, preſuming that theſe words convey ſuch a meaning to common ſenſe, that it cannot be miſtaken without great pains and ingenuity. I now recommend it to you'—This was the amount of what I ſaid to *Henry*.

M. Was he offended at the freedom of your ſpeech?

T. No: on the contrary, he thanked me in the warmeſt and moſt friendly terms, acknowledging the force of what I had ſaid; and bid me be aſſured, that he would hereafter requeſt of God only ſuch things as concerned his true happineſs; and above all, implore that lively *attention* and *ſteady truſt* which I had recommended: adding theſe words, "I feel myſelf happy in the reſtraint you have ſuggeſted, with regard to my wandering into a wild field of confuſed thoughts. If I can fix my mind on objects ſo comprehenſible and intereſting, I ſhall be at reſt. I have too often felt myſelf wretched, for want of a compaſs to ſteer by; I mean the advice of a friend to ſuit my particular ſituation, when I might by the means you propoſe, in the moſt eaſy and pleaſing manner, have collected my ſcattered thoughts; and by my *attention* to God, and my *truſt* in him, rendered myſelf acceptable to him, and enjoyed all the happy effects of his favour."

M. Did he take your advice really and in good earneſt, or only reaſon upon the propriety of it?

T. He adopted it in *opinion*, and reduced it into *practice*, and ſoon became a new kind of being. He was more pleaſant in his converſation in *ſickneſs*, than he had uſually been in *health*: he became every day more indifferent to life, regarding it only as he employed it in doing good: He aſſured

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me more than once, that he wondered at himſelf, how he could paſs away ſo many years of life in ſuch an inſenſibility, or rather ignorance of its greateſt joy.

M. Is not this generally the caſe with mankind, when they live careleſsly or diſſolutely?

T. I apprehend it is; for if we are not *attentive* to God, and truſt in him, we grow *numbed* with irreligious coldneſs, or a habit of *indolence*, totally inconſiſtent with the joy and peacefulneſs which religion affords.—I am not ſure, *Mary*, that I have ſufficiently explained myſelf to *thee*.

M. I believe I underſtand you: If I am attentive to God, I ſhall think of his wiſdom and power, his juſtice and his mercy: in ſhort, if I *think* of *him*, I ſhall feel his *preſence*, and be awed by a ſenſe of duty to him; and the more dutiful I am, the more I ſhall truſt in him; my mind will acquire ſtrength; my temper chearfulneſs, and my hopes become joyful. Religion will not be burdenſome to me, but it will grow eaſy and familiar, and prove what our Saviour ſays of it, *My yoke is eaſy, and my burden light.*

T. Well, my dear *Mary*, I ſee plainly that nothing is loſt that I tell thee.

M. I am *attentive* to what you ſay, and hope I ſhall profit by it. But pray, my Father, did *Henry* live long after this converſation?

T. He lived above three years, and died in great tranquility. He was full of the warmeſt expreſſions of his gratitude to me whenever we met, and he left me a ſmall legacy as a token of it.——Didſt thou ever ſee my couſin *Jacob?*

M. Yes, my Father; he called on you the ſummer before laſt; I know that he is dead: was there any thing particular in his character?

T. He was very ſingular in ſeveral inſtances. I once entertained a moſt cordial regard for him, nor did I forſake him in his laſt hours: I frequently watched by him, in hopes of an opportunity of making him ſenſible of his ſituation. He often talked upon the nature and neceſſity of *virtue*, and the obligations of it with reſpect to this world: but alas! when I would have led him to the happy effects of it hereafter, and the glorious rewards prepared in heaven,

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through the infinite mercy of God, he ſeemed cold and unaffected; *reſerve* was viſible in his countenance, and his expreſſions were confuſed, inſomuch that he left me at a loſs to know what he thought.

M. Is it poſſible he could doubt?

T. What is it pride will not do? How many walk about this world mad with their own conceits! In ſhort, when his hour approached, I urged him ſtill cloſer, deſiring the ſatisfaction of hearing if he had hopes of heaven, till at length his ſpeech failed him. I know not whether I was urged moſt by curioſity or grief, when I ſaw him in ſuch a hopeleſs ſtate; but I begged him, if he could not ſpeak, to hold up his hand as a ſignal of his hope.

M. What was the reſult?

T. He ſigh'd, and ſhook his head, but held not up his hand!—Alas, the remembrance of it is painful to my heart!

M. What was it made him ſo reſerved, or ſo hopeleſs? Do you think he was ſubſtantially virtuous?

T. Indeed I cannot ſay that I think he was; for what *ſubſtance* can there be in ſuch a flimſy kind of goodneſs, as carried him no further than to confeſs virtue to be good, and vice productive of evil in this world; and yet not believe that virtue will be rewarded with everlaſting happineſs? What but this can fire the ſpirit with a heavenly joy? *Jacob* might in moſt inſtances, do as he would wiſh to be done by; and not deſtroy another man, leſt another ſhould deſtroy him; and not having any violent propenſity to unlawful gratifications, he might, from various prudential conſiderations, refrain from them: he might alſo, from mere indolence of temper, be fond of peace, and the frame of his mind incline him to be patient; but is this the only true glory and intereſt of a *man?* I believe it rarely happens without the help of religion, that ſuch qualities exiſt in any eminent degree; but it ſeems to have been the caſe of our couſin. If what he did was not from a ſenſe of obedience to God, nor a belief that virtue would be rewarded in a life to come; neither could he think that *vice* would be puniſhed. What a flimſey kind of virtue, I ſay, muſt his have been; and accordingly we ſee that when he came to die,

die, he was without hope of happineſs after death. Real virtue rewards itſelf in the peace which it affords, but that peace muſt ſpring from our hopes in immortal happineſs, in the ſame manner as we are reſtrained from vice, from the fear of puniſhment. Happy it is when we *are reſtrained*, though it be from this double conſideration of hope and fear; fear of temporal chaſtiſements and everlaſting miſery. Poor *Jacob* was crack-brained; or at the bottom, a proud fooliſh man. I mention him as a very ſingular inſtance, amidſt the variety of characters there are in the world, and to inform thee what care thou ſhouldſt take not to converſe with people who are ſtrangers to the advantages which the true chriſtian enjoys over all others.

M. I am ſenſible that young perſons ſhould be particularly on their guard, and more eſpecially young women. What was *Jacob*'s character when he was a young man?

T. We uſed to think him very conceited; for he treated every body as inferior to him in underſtanding. Thou ſeeſt how pride goes before a fall; and that pretending to be wiſe he was at heart a fool, though he had too much decency publicly to avow his falſe principles and belief. As he advanced in years, he increaſed in obſtinacy; and at length he ſhewed what I have often remarked to thee, that we ought not to expect any miracle will be wrought at the time of our death; for as we live, ſo we probably ſhall die!

M. Indeed I believe this generally happens: *Jacob*, with all his pretended virtue, was in a deplorable ſituation.

T. My acquaintance *Abraham* behaved in a different manner. In conſequence of ſome uneaſineſs on his mind, he applied to the miniſter for advice and direction how to make his peace with God, and he gave him the following inſtruction; "When you pray, conſider the weight and purport of every word you utter. Read the New Teſtament; God may, with great propriety, be called the author of this book; the end of its being wrote is the ſalvation of mankind; it is *truth*, without any mixture of error, and it contains the words of eternal life.——If you are perſuaded of this, you muſt conſider it as the rule and guide of your life, or you will be as deficient in reaſon as in religion."—*Abraham* purſued

ſued the advice, and having experienced the happy effects of it in the *peace* and *comfort* of his mind, he embraced every opportunity that offered of reading ſome portion of the ſacred writings, ſuch as he clearly underſtood, and conſidered as intereſting to his everlaſting happineſs. He uſed to ſay, 'When armed with this little book, I ſtand firm under all the calamities of life, and feel myſelf proof againſt the terrors of death. I ſubdue temptations, and triumph over the evil ſpirit;' and accordingly he left the world with as much ſatisfaction, as a philoſopher who has made a temperate meal, riſes from table, not ſeeming to regret the loſs of life, in any degree the more for leaving his wealth behind him!

M. This was a great happineſs indeed: what is neceſſary to be done, ſhould be performed gracefully, and it is *neceſſary to die!*—I have heard that many die with great compoſure, and ſome even in a chearful humour.

T. Every one amongſt *us* has a peculiar character which is often carried through life. My maſter uſed to ſpeak of a friend of his, who was poetically inclined, and accuſtomed to ſpeak in a certain harmony of words: ſo that on examining the ſpeech which he made in his laſt moments, it chimed in verſe. In giving a detail of his own hiſtory, he ſets off a little vain-glorioufly, if not pedantically; but he ſoon corrects himſelf: he ſpoke ſo much from his heart, as men are ſuppoſed to do upon ſuch occaſions, that I think thou mayſt draw ſome uſeful inſtruction from it. He ſaid,

'I never found delight in irkſome ſloth!—
Early I roſe and late I took my reſt,
Zealous to ſerve my country and mankind,
I ſtrove by deeds of charity, to heal
The deadly wounds which ſin and folly make!
And now I truſt in thy tranſcendent love,
O Lord of life, to heal my *own* diſeaſe!—
Though oft diſturb'd by *paſſions'* reſtleſs force,
I paid the tribute of a tortur'd mind.
And heav'n, indulgent to my anxious ſoul,
Chear'd me with comfort and angelic peace!
When *Terror's awful Prince* held up his dart,

With grief unfeign'd I offer'd up my pray'r;
And ſtill thy hand, O Father, interpos'd!
'Twas not my arm, nor all the ſtrength which I
Could boaſt, had pow'r to ſhield me from the grave,
Good heav'n inclin'd to give me days of life,
To ſhew my gratitude and pureſt love,
And tell of all thy mercies, O my God!
That *Pow'r* unſeen by eyes of fleſh and blood,
Who gives all nature energy and life,
Reach'd out his friendly and benignant arm,
To ſave me from the falſe and flatt'ring ſnares
Of ſin, and all the treach'ry of earth-born pride!
What other hand could ſave me from myſelf,
And all the ſecret lurking paths of vice?
Like the rich dreſs of flow'rs which charms the eye,
And with their fragrance captivates the ſenſe.
I feel the joy which virtue ever gives.
O let me proſtrate fall at heav'ns high throne,
And hope for mercy, now my life is ſpent!
Thanks be to God that I have liv'd ſo long,
Thanks be to God that now I end my life!
O Father, ſhield my ſoul from death's dread ſting,
And let my ſpirit wing its flight to thee!'—

M. I preſume he was a good young man: his words chime tolerably well without hurting his ſenſe, and perhaps I may remember them the more eaſily for their being in verſe.

T. I hope thou wilt remember them, or at leaſt the ſubſtance of them. My maſter once came home full of a declaration of a more ſerious kind made by one of his dying acquaintance. This gentleman, in his younger days, had been of a club of *reprobates*, who uſed to cheriſh each other's infidelity. He had ſenſe enough to ſeparate himſelf from them many years before his death; however, the remembrance of it had left ſuch impreſſions on him, that when he came to die, he made ſome very intereſting confeſſions of his opinion, and the ſtate of his mind. Thou wilt eaſily underſtand the ſenſe of it, though ſome of his words may not be familiar to thee. After aſſuring my maſter of the

ſincerity of his heart towards God, he ſaid, 'O my friend, I feel the hand of that Being which gives the air the power of life and death—which governs earth's ponderous weight; this vaſt expanded maſs which hangs by nothing but the Almighty power of God!——I ſtand amazed at the infinite ſpace around me; at the waters which know their bounds; and the fierce raging powers of fire; how all are kept controlled! Theſe all combine; or elſe, by elemental ſtrife, under the influence of the heavenly bodies, produce this vaſt ſtupendous harmony! Who made them as they are, or who reſtrains their force, but that Almighty power which governs all! But I ſtand moſt amazed when I conſider, who firſt gave a being to *man*, this wonderful *epitome of all*; this Being, whoſe thoughts extend down to the deep abyſs, or ſoar beyond creation's empireal bounds, if bounds there are to heaven's great workmanſhip! Who hath done this, or who upholds this frame, but thou, O ſelf-exiſtent Being, moſt wiſe—moſt juſt—infinitely good—infinitely merciful—omnipotent God!'—Here he pauſed—and after ſome time he went on: 'You know, my friend, that in my younger days, (I thank heaven they are long ſince fled) I often liſtened to the idle tales of real or pretended *unbelievers:* They affected to be *mighty wiſe*, while all the nations of the earth, each with their ſyſtems of religion and peculiar modes of worſhip, agreed in this great article of human faith, that there is a firſt cauſe, One great, one only Sovereign Lord of all!—Where ſhall we look for any traces of thoſe days, before the Almighty mandate iſſued forth to form this wondrous frame! But if this handy-work of God is wrought with ſuch tranſcendent art, ſuch glory and magnificence, what ſhall we ſay of the great Author of it?—In the fond ſearches of the human heart, I have ſometimes aſked my buſy thoughts, why are we ſurrounded with ſo much *evil? Why* was the ſtorm which buried ſo many thouſands in the boſom of the deep?—It was but *death*, the common law of *nature:* perhaps it came only a little time before the ordinary courſe ſhe runs. And in reflecting further, I ſaw, that this very ſtorm might purge off all thoſe noxious particles which frequently

infect the air, and thus ward off the dreadful plagues, or burning fevers, which might deſtroy a much greater number, and render the houſes of widows deſolate.

All things which happen may be reſolved into ſome cauſe, which proves that God is *wiſe* and *good*, though man is weak and ſinful; and when he preſumes to find fault, then he errs moſt. Short-ſighted and defective as he is, within the narrow circle of the government of kingdoms, or of ſmall communities; of a family, and of *himſelf*; in his reaſonings, he would diveſt heaven of its power, and invade the province of the Deity! Such are the effects of earth-born pride, when uncontroled by religion. Man is like a thing of nought: if a vapour from the earth, or wind from heaven, can level him with the duſt, *of what can he boaſt?*

When *ſickneſs*, with pallid cheeks and hollow voice has paid *me* a viſit, unpleaſing as ſhe ſeemed in form, ſhe taught me penitence and godly hope: my thoughts grew cool; my heart became true and candid; and *piety*, my beſt and ſureſt friend, ſoothed my ſolitary hours, and lull'd my ſoul to reſt.——

When I looked back, and thought on the partners of my my jovial days, and trod their wonted haunts, under their gilded roofs, many a melancholy tear has trickled down my cheek. They long ſince have tried what it is to die!—Heaven grant them pardon!—Some ſunk beneath a load of vice! Some, ſtung with deep remorſe, finiſhed their days in heart-piercing woe!—And now *my* hour is come—O thou moſt merciful, moſt benignant Lord of life, thy precious balm has cheered my ſpirit, when in penitential ſorrow I applied to thee!'—Turning towards my maſter, he ſaid, 'Conſcience, my friend, has often guarded me in the day of danger. Even amidſt the noiſy mirth of my once-lov'd-companions, and the clamours of their tumultuous joys, conſcience hath often whiſpered me, *All is not right.* My heart reproach'd me, as if *virtue*, in her majeſtic form, already ſat in judgment on my ſoul—*Reaſon* and *paſſion* had their alternate ſway; but never did I loſe ſight of thoſe bright paths which lead to heavenly happineſs. In ſpite of all

all the cordial drops which vice could furniſh, I found my cup embittered; nor could I ever taſte the ſweets of peace and comfort, till I entirely forſook my wild companions. For ſome of them I had a great friendſhip, if friendſhip could exiſt devoid of piety: others were delightful in their converſation: When I attempted to check their folly, they begged to know how long I had been ſeized with melancholy. Enthuſiaſm was their next plea againſt me: at length I kept aloof, and thought how beſt I might ſecure myſelf on the approaching day of retribution. It was in vain to argue with *them* on the true principles of chriſtian faith: They had no hopes of bliſs beyond the trance of giddy joys, which ſeemed to ſcatter all their fears.

Thus happily eſcaped, I applied myſelf to the ſtudy of my religion; and I am well convinced, that man indeed walketh in a vain ſhadow, and diſquieteth himſelf in vain, whenever he departs from that rectitude which is eſſential to his make, or neglects his immortality!'——After ſome pauſe, he continued, "And now, O Lord, what is my hope? Where ſhall I repoſe my confidence? To thee, I devote my heart, and to the laſt expiring moment pray for mercy, for His ſake who died upon the croſs for ſinners who repent! O ſave me for thy mercies ſake; and in thy goodneſs hear my prayer, and ſpare my country and my friends!"

After taking a formal leave of his weeping friends, he died in a ſhort time after, much regretted *by all* who knew him.

M. He ſeems to have ſpoken from his *heart*, and with uncommon energy.

T. This gentleman was the only man of the whole club, of whom we have any honourable account; or from whoſe hiſtory we can learn any thing uſeful, except it be to avoid the ſad and dreadful effects of vice and infidelity.

M. Such an example of repentance ought the more to be recorded. We complain of our ſuperiors when they do ill, it is but juſtice to commend them when they reform.

T. True, my daughter: I hope they will give us more frequent opportunities to follow a good example, without hazarding their own ſalvation.

Circumſtance of piety in the death of a duke.

The noble Duke *(a)* who lately died, was another good example. His hour approaching, he deſired a young lady of his family to ſing to him the 104th Pſalm, in which he joined very devoutly and audibly. He requeſted it to be ſung a ſecond time, which the lady performed, though under the oppreſſion of grief, and therefore thou mayſt imagine, not without great difficulty. Immediately after this, he calmly reſigned his ſoul to God.

M. Was not this a *rare* inſtance of piety among perſons of his high rank and condition?—Was he rich?

T. I mention it as ſingular, and the more the pity! He was immenſely rich, and diſtinguiſhed in the political world; but not therefore the leſs a *chriſtian.*

M. What did the world ſay on the occaſion?

T. Some ſmiled, as if it were a thing out of character for a *Duke!* Nobody could, with any decency, condemn him: few had piety enough to applaud, and I am afraid fewer ſtill will have the grace to imitate him.

M. Is there any other perſon within your knowledge, from the account of whoſe death, I may learn to court *virtue* or ſhun *vice?*

General reflections on the deaths related.

T. I do not at preſent recollect any other in the circle of my acquaintance, or within the compaſs of my knowledge, at leaſt of my own ſex. I hope thou wilt draw inſtruction from the circumſtances which I have already related, and learn the better how to ſhun the dreadful effects of vice.

Humanity, as well as *chriſtian* charity, may lead us to lament the condition of others, with regard to a *future ſtate*, when perhaps a due ſenſe of our own condition ſhould have employed a greater portion of attention to ourſelves; but it is always a duty to pray for the happineſs of others, and to promote it by all poſſible means: This is one way of advancing our own eternal welfare.——The great evil of life conſiſts chiefly in the *thoughtleſſneſs* of mankind: They acknowledge the *being of God*, which all nature proclaims; they do not deny that there is a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments

(a) Duke of Bedford, 1771.

ments after death, which revelation has laid open to the *chriſtian:* the *Mahomedan*, and even the *Pagan* as well as the *Jew*, profeſs a belief in it, and acknowledge that it depends upon their conduct in this life. We are all conſcious of our own rationality, and we generally diſtinguiſh good from evil, but, like untoward children, we frighten ourſelves with imaginary difficulties; and crying, *there is a lion in the way*, where, in reality, there is no other path ſafe and ſecure, we grow indolent, and indulge thoſe propenſities which enſnare our ſouls.

Whether by the tyranny of *cuſtom*, or the want of induſtry in the only important buſineſs of our lives, we contract a habit of diſobedience to our great Parent and Protector, till at length we think very little whether we pleaſe him or not. This ſeems to be the ſhort hiſtory of a large portion of mankind.

In the mean time *death* approaches: but ſtill I fear we think more of what we *ſhall* loſe, than of what we *may gain*. As to the ſimple act of dying; ſeparate it from the conſideration of the life to come, it is little more than a ſoft ſleep. Some who are afflicted with a troubled mind, we ſee bemoan their condition, as I have related to thee; otherwiſe, we hear of no lamentations! We cannot certainly tell all that paſſes in the minds of others; but we know that *out of the fulneſs of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*. Indulgent nature, or divine goodneſs, call it by what name we pleaſe, prepares us gently. As far as I can obſerve, it is the *living* that weep, not thoſe that *die*.

I have already communicated to thee many thoughts on this ſubject; and have only to add, that there is a peculiar happineſs in a chearful temper demonſtrated even in death. Many who were diſtinguiſhed for facetiouſneſs, have maintained their character to the laſt breath.

M. Can you recollect any inſtances of this kind?

T. Yes; I remember more than one. In days of leſs politeneſs, *Mary*, it was a *cuſtom*, even among *ſcholars*, to torture words, and put common ſenſe on the rack, to make a jingle of mere ſounds, or falſe ſimili- *Death of a punſter.*

tudes,

tudes, which they called by the name of *punning*. It is ſaid that a perſon of this caſt being on his death-bed, a cordial was offered to him, and he was preſſed to take, *were it only one ſwallow*; he anſwered; *One ſwallow never makes a ſummer*, and immediately expired.

It was a more reſpectful fancy of a great man of our time *(b)*, who, according to the ſtyle of our country, was then *in oppoſition:* in his laſt hour he ſaid to his friends, in the height of good humour, *Well, my friends*, I am going over to the *majority!*

Death of a punctilious gentleman.

Thou mayeſt, perhaps, be equally ſurprized at the complaiſance of the gentleman, who being ſuddenly attacked by a mortal diſorder, ſent his excuſe to his friend with whom he was engaged to have dined on that day, in theſe familiar words, *I cannot poſſibly have the pleaſure of waiting on you to-day, for I am going to die.*

Cuſtom of giving information of the death of an acquaintance.

This brings to my mind a cuſtom practiſed in ſome countries, upon the death of a perſon, to ſend notice to his friends, to let them know that *he wiſhed them a long and happy life*; intimating his deceaſe, and that he thought of them in his laſt hours. It is natural to ſuppoſe, when a good man leaves the world in friendſhip with it, that he might wiſh ſuch a communication ſhould be made.

M. Would not this appear fantaſtical amongſt us?

T. When refinements take place, ſo far that the ſimple paths of friendſhip and truth are in a great meaſure forſaken, I believe it would be derided; yet every one ſhould ſupport a character, and this cuſtom ſeems to carry with it ſomething uncommonly generous.

If we view life from a greater eminence, we ſhould learn to adopt good principles, and adhere to them, even though we ſhould be condemned to death, by the miſtaken judgment or iniquity of others. This hath been the caſe of many diſtinguiſhed perſons in all ages, who have preſerved their *good humour* as well as their piety to the laſt.

I have heard my maſter talk of *Phocion*, a great and good man,

(b) Hon. Henry Bilſon Legge.

man, in ancient days. He was a general at *Athens*, the renowned city where our great St. *Paul* preached to the people. When he was leading to death, one of the rabble ſpit on him; upon which he called, with the authority he had been uſed to, "Is no one at hand to teach that fellow how to behave himſelf?" A perſon of inferior condition, who was going with him to execution, bemoaning himſelf unmanfully, he aſked him, "Is it no conſolation to ſuch a man as thou art, to die with *Phocion?*" His intimate friend *Niocles*, being under the ſame ſentence, deſired he might die firſt: *Phocion* ſaid, "This is a difficult requeſt indeed, but I never denied you any thing, and therefore I will not refuſe you this." Being aſked what commands he had for his ſon: he anſwered, "Tell him my commands are, that he ſhould forget this injury done to me by the Athenians,"—and then died with all the tranquility which innocence and reſolution can inſpire.

M. Was he accuſed falſely?

T. Thoſe who made a crime of his political principles, were afterwards put to death themſelves, and his very murderers paid great honour to his memory.

Epaminondas, a general at *Thebes*, having received a mortal ſtab in battle, and the ſword remaining in his body, would not ſuffer it to be drawn out, till he had received intelligence that his troops had obtained the victory; and then he ſaid, "This is not the end of my life, my fellow-ſoldiers; it is now your *Epaminondas* is born, who dies in ſo much glory."

M. Have we not ſome of our own great captains as good and famous as theſe?

T. In thoſe days, it ſeems that philoſophy and military glory kept a more equal pace: But we find many ſtrong proofs of very high and generous ſentiments in the characters of brave men of our own country: I hardly believe any nation ever exceeded ours. What doſt thou think of our general *Wolfe?* Having executed a military plan at *Quebec*, conducted with the greateſt wiſdom and moſt conſummate bravery, he received a mortal wound: while his breath yet remained, he heard it ſaid, *they fly:* he aſked 'who flies?' when

 he

he was told the enemy, then ſaid he "I die contentedly;" and expired, as it were in the arms of victory!

M. Was he as much diſtinguiſhed for his religion as his bravery?

T. I have no reaſon to believe but that he was a good man. Soldiers, from the nature of their occupation, ought to live, if poſſible, in a more conſtant readineſs for death than any other claſs of mankind, though I am afraid this is not always the caſe: from acting in a crowd, they often become thoughtleſs of what is to happen to them, either in this world or the next.

I mention theſe inſtances only to prove in what an eaſy familiar manner ſome men die: but not to reſt our evidence upon ſoldiers only, let us reflect on the conduct of Sir *Thomas More*, diſtinguiſhed for his good humour. He was brought to the ſcaffold for adhering to his opinion in religion, againſt the Pope: he expreſſed himſelf on the occaſion with a peculiar jocoſeneſs, by telling the executioner, "You muſt take care not to hurt my beard, your commiſſion extends only to the cutting off my head;" and it ſeemed as if the ſevering his head from his body was not a circumſtance which in the leaſt diſquieted his mind. Confident of the rectitude of his cauſe for which he died, and no leſs perſuaded of the immortality of the ſoul, he did not ſhew any unuſual degree of ſorrow and concern on the occaſion, not appearing to be in the leaſt dejected or terrified.

M. Are theſe inſtances certain proofs of preparation for death, or of expectations of happineſs in another ſtate?

T. In general I think they are ſtrong evidence. Gaiety of temper may prove, that as a man lived without reflecting on his end, ſo he may die in mere levity and childiſh careleſſneſs. One may die in great compoſure, as a true effect of virtue; another may do the ſame, and it ſhall prove that he is mad; but where there is a conſciouſneſs of a well-ſpent life, it is not wonderful that the proſpect of eternity ſhould be pleaſing!

M. If people in common life ſhould affect this manner, may it not be attended with ſome evil conſequences?

T. Don't

T. Don't be alarmed, child: our natural fears of death are very ſufficient guards againſt any improper imitation of ſuch examples; but I dare ſay there are many proofs of greatneſs of mind, in common life, more than are recorded in ſtory.

M. Theſe inſtances ſeem to teach us to triumph over death, whilſt they point out the advantages of a chearful temper.

Death and declaration of a clergyman in relation to the Lord's Supper.

T. Of all ſuch accounts, no one affords me greater ſatisfaction, than that of a *clergyman*; the ſubject of whoſe joy turned upon his ſucceſs in converting domeſtics to a ſenſe of their duty, with regard to the Supper of our Lord. Thou remembereſt my reaſonings and complaints on this ſubject, and how ſelf-evident it appeared, that all doubts and fears concerning it, were founded either upon ſtupid ignorance, or childiſh careleſſneſs *(a)*. This judicious miniſter of the goſpel, who may be juſtly ſtiled a true diſciple of our Lord, acknowledged, that for many years of his life, he had been very remiſs in not recommending this part of chriſtian duty with unremitting labour. "It is not enough," ſays he, "to mention it occaſionally: it muſt be *repeated*, it muſt be *urged* with zeal and ſtrength of perſuaſion." Here he pauſed. Being warmed with his ſubject, and his own pious remembrance of that great Lord and Maſter, before whom he was going to appear, he proceeded, "According to the beſt of my obſervation, many are alarmed at the words in our tranſlation, *eats and drinks damnation to himſelf, if he receives unworthily*; but this paſſage is ſo eaſily explained, it is next to impoſſible for any perſon of common ſenſe not to ſee that it related to the *Corinthians*, who converted this Supper of our Lord into a common meal, at which they debauched themſelves with exceſs.—No: the neglect chiefly ariſes from another cauſe: it is the *fooliſhneſs* and *iniquity* of the heart which hath led ſo many to imagine, that as this *commemoration* will be ſome reſtraint upon them, therefore they do not chuſe to receive. This they do not openly avow; but they ſecretly act upon this principle. Some are governed merely by chance, without thinking at all; others

(a) Pages 36 to 46.

imagine, that after receiving the Lord's Supper, the ſins which they commit will become the more ſinful. Though they acknowledge that they labour under a ſenſe of ſin, yet they neglect this method to eaſe themſelves of the burthen. What would any one think of the perſon who ſhould ſay, I will not attempt to cure myſelf of the *cholic*, which pains me much, and may kill me if I neglect it, leſt it ſhould turn to the gout in my ſtomach? Good God! that any creature, endued with reaſon, and exerciſing the faculties of a man, ſhould, in a matter of ſuch vaſt importance, *argue* ſo unwiſely, and *act* ſo fooliſhly!—It is true that we give a ſolemn aſſurance at the table of our Lord that we mean to lead a *new life*—and what is this but a ſecond baptiſm, or a *confirmation* of baptiſm? If in conſequence of this act we have really a deeper ſenſe of the tranſgreſſion when we ſin, is not this the very motive which urges us to exert our powers to *prevent* ſinning, to keep the mind in awe, and to implore the mercies of heaven when we offend?—Every child may underſtand this to be a happy circumſtance, as it naturally tends to prevent ſin; and may, in the courſe of time, produce as ſinleſs a ſtate, as human nature is capable of. No one can be ſo ſenſeleſs as to imagine, becauſe they were obedient to their Lord and Maſter, and, at a certain time did what he commanded them to do in remembrance of him, that for *this reaſon* he will reſent their conduct the more, and not plead their cauſe at the throne of heaven, if they tranſgreſs again, although they ſhould again repent. We may loſe our ſouls, if we perſiſt in preſumptuous offences; but we ſhall not loſe them merely becauſe we were pious and obedient at a certain time.—Thoſe muſt be very little acquainted with the world, who do not know that the lives of the beſt of men are a mixture of *good* and *evil*: No man is ſinleſs; he is moſt a ſaint, who is the leaſt a ſinner. This whole matter, therefore, reſts upon the dictates of common ſenſe; it depends on this circumſtance, whether the party *doubting* or *offending*, thinks upon the whole, that it is his intereſt to follow the maſter he profeſſes to ſerve, or not; remembering, that if he does not follow him, he muſt ſhew him the higheſt affront, and diſobey his commands.

If at the moment we *chriſtians* are convinced that our Lord and Redeemer is giving the higheſt proof of the greateſt love for us, we treat him diſreſpectfully, and neglect his commands, what can be ſaid of us? Are we not monſtrouſly fooliſh and ungrateful, and as wicked as fooliſh?"——Then addreſſing himſelf in a more particular manner to his own ſervants, he ſaid, "By ſuch kind of arguments, I prevailed at laſt; and I have received a ſatisfaction beyond any other which my life affords; a ſatisfaction which now fills my heart with joy and gladneſs, in that I have ſeen fifty or ſixty domeſtics in livery, and others, who were long accuſtomed to neglect their duty, at one time at the communion table of my church: this was the thing I wiſhed to live to behold.——And now, O God, let thy ſervant depart in peace!—and let me, with my laſt expiring breath, charge you all to remember your great Lord and Maſter, in the way he hath commanded you to remember him, that *he* may remember *you*, on that day when he ſhall appear arrayed in all the majeſty and glory of the Deity!"

M. This indeed was a ſubject of joy even in death! O my Father, it is a ſad ſtory that ſo few attend the table of our Lord; but I hope our obedience, in this inſtance, will ceaſe to be a *wonder*, and that the common duty of a *chriſtian* will be common to all conditions of life. Poverty can never be pleaded in excuſe for impiety; and thoſe who are not born to fortunes, cannot be in their right minds, if they refuſe the riches of the mercies of God, which will endure when the faſhion of this world is paſſed away; and all diſtinctions loſt, but that of everlaſting happineſs to the *good* and virtuous, and everlaſting miſery to the children of diſobedience! I will never ceaſe to follow this worthy divine, in precept and example, to the utmoſt of my power.

T. I am glad, my daughter, to hear thee talk ſo earneſtly on this intereſting ſubject. May the God of mercy keep thee in his remembrance, that thou mayſt never forget, neither the ſufferings, nor the cauſe of the ſufferings of thy crucified Lord! And ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe the Lord of life to preſerve thee from the grave, I hope thou wilt never neglect this ſacrifice of gratitude and praiſe, nor ceaſe to commemorate

morate the death of ſo mighty and good a friend, in the way which he hath commanded!

M. You have not yet told me any thing concerning your maſter's death: Pray, before we part to-night, tell me how *he* took his leave of this bad world, and what was his character.

Character, principles, opinion, and death of a man, who endeavoured to be wiſe.

T. My maſter died without any parade. During his illneſs, he commanded me more than once, to read to him certain parts of the *New Teſtament*, and likewiſe *Sherlock on death*. Within a fortnight he received the ſacrament twice or thrice, and expreſſed great ſatisfaction upon theſe occaſions, in his grateful remembrance of this ſolemn propitiatory ſacrifice; declaring himſelf ready to follow the ſteps of his crucified Lord.—As he found himſelf declining very faſt, he commanded me to ſit down by his bed-ſide; and after ſome pauſe, he ſaid, "*Trueman*, as the world goes, you are an honeſt man, and I believe more ambitious of being a *chriſtian*, than of making a figure in life. I think you are in the right: you ſee in me, what ſlender footing the moſt cautious and thoughtful can have; and that if I were worth a million, it would not ſignify any thing to me; and as to other people, whether they or I leave great wealth to poſterity, the good is the ſame. I am going to try what it is to live in that unembodied ſtate, in which true chriſtians have ſuch a ſteady faith: It is therefore neceſſary that I ſhould put *my houſe in order*.—I think you will make a good farmer, and live many happy years, and breed up your daughter in the fear of God!—The greateſt prince on earth cannot give her ſo good a dowry. I have left you a ſtock to begin with. I believe your prayers are heard, and therefore I hope you will not forget me, who have daily ſolicited heaven in your behalf. In your abſence, I have often ſpoken of you as *my friend*, as well as *my ſervant*, and I have found but few men in the world who have deſerved the name ſo well: God preſerve you, and make you happy in this world, and in that to which I am going; where, perhaps, we ſhall meet again. I hope that we are both faithful to our common Lord and Maſter, in whoſe blood we truſt.

As

As for the reſt, I can tell you nothing uſeful, but what you know already. I have *many* faults, but I have been more anxious to do well, than careful to be well ſpoken of." —He ſeemed deſirous of ſaying more, but his voice failed him.

M. What did you ſay on a parting ſo intereſting to you?

T. Say, my daughter! I kiſſed his dying hand and *wept*.—He had ſo often honoured me with his diſcourſe, and aſſiſted me with his counſel, during the courſe of twelve happy years, that this parting ſeemed to be like a finiſhing period to the labours of *his* life and *my own*; for though I had a proſpect of living with ſome degree of comfort, I thought I could with pleaſure have died with him.

M. Was it that you had ſo ſincere a love for him? You have often mentioned ſeveral particulars relating to him: what was his *general character?*

T. It is difficult for me to ſpeak of him as I ought. When I reflect on the good parts of his conduct and character, a thouſand thoughts ruſh in upon my heart, and I feel it bleed with tenderneſs and gratitude: and when I think of his infirmities, they excite as great a degree of compaſſion. "The wiſeſt of men have their follies, the beſt their failings."

M. Was he proud? There is nothing I dread ſo much as the pride of a maſter or miſtreſs.

T. I have been ſometimes tempted to think him *imperious*, though he was of a very placable temper; and he held it as a maxim, that we ſhould be tender in reproaching thoſe who are obliged to ſubmit: But in theſe days, *Mary*, there is a frequent neceſſity of admonition. His quickneſs, which had the appearance of *pride*, rather proceeded from his conſtitution, than from any high conceit of himſelf. He uſed to ſay, that "too auſtere a philoſophy makes few *wiſe men*; too rigorous diſcipline, few good ſervants; and too hard a religion, few religious perſons." In the purſuit of peace, and the relief of miſery, he was meek and gentle; often quoting the ordinary form of begging in Italy, *Do good for your own ſake:* obſerving, that if we do no good with what we poſſeſs, it can do us no good. He was always at leiſure to perform all the kind offices in his power; hardly ever making

making his amuſement a reaſon for declining any duty of humanity; though glad when he could mix the *pleaſant* and the *uſeful*.

M. Was he rich and fortunate?

T. No: but he always lived like a gentleman, and had ſomething to beſtow in charity. He uſed to ſay, "that one month in the ſchool of affliction, taught more wiſdom than the graveſt precepts in ſeven years; and that no man could have a thorough taſte of proſperity, to whom adverſity never had happened." He has often told me, that he apprehended "charity, rightly underſtood, and founded on a ſteady belief in the goſpel, contained all chriſtian graces; that thoſe who have not this divine principle, have no good in them; and that this is enough to condemn them at the tribunal of eternal juſtice, without enquiring what evil they have done."

M. Was he fond of *dreſs* and *diverſion*?

T. Much like other people; but in the latter years of his life he beſtowed very little coſt on his perſon or his amuſements His temperance did not ſeem to be ſo much the effect of any auſterity in the virtue of his mind, as from his not being of a robuſt frame of body: he uſed to ſay, that it is eaſier to prevent diſeaſes than to cure them. He rarely indulged himſelf in public ſhews or entertainments, complaining of the wild abſurdity of ſacrificing *health* in purſuit of *pleaſure*. He mourn'd over thoſe who lived aſſembled in a crowd, they appearing to him as combined to deſtroy each other. Upon the ſame principle, his firſt object, in his dreſs, was to guard againſt the inclemencies of the ſkies, not neglecting a certain portion of elegancy. He beſtowed as little coſt upon his food; he diſliked ſitting long at table; and playing at cards ſeemed to him as loſing ſo much time. In his common diſcourſe, he ſeemed to be in ſearch of ſomething uſeful, inſomuch that I have often imagined he thought he had done nothing while any thing in his power remained undone. Thus it became next to impoſſible he ſhould ever find much time for unprofitable pleaſure. This propenſity ſeemed to check all ſelf-applauſe in him, yet I ſometimes thought his communicative temper led him to talk of himſelf too much.

From

From his youth up he had reaſon to think his life precarious, which gave a turn to his fortune; yet he was more *enterprizing* than *cautious*: he was frequently biaſſed by other people's opinions, when he ſhould have taken counſel of his own heart; but he thought better of the world than it deſerved, and therefore was often deceived.

M. Did not this ſour his temper, and excite a diſguſt towards mankind?

T. Juſt the contrary: he uſed to ſay, the more bad men he found in the world, the more he learnt how to treat them; and the more he thought himſelf, and all well-deſigning perſons, obliged to defend the innocent.

As to wealth, he obſerved that it was a much greater misfortune to be plunged into all the fooleries of a large eſtate, than to be denied ſome gratifications which a man of taſte and virtue might naturally wiſh for.

He always ſeemed more pleaſed when he could relieve the diſtreſſes of one below him, than when he partook of the ſplendor of the opulent, on which he had learnt to ſet but a ſmall value. He did not ſee how *greatneſs*, as vulgarly underſtood, could be an object of envy to a wiſe man; nor what ſolid ſatisfaction could be derived from more than a man could innocently enjoy.

M. Had he any employment in the ſervice of the public?

T. He had an office; but he courted no favour at the expence of his integrity, nor departed from his candour from any hope of advantage, or fear of inconvenience.

In regard to virtue, he ſaid that *truth* is the foundation of it, and that there needs but one bad inclination to make a man *vicious*; but many good ones are neceſſary to make him virtuous; adding, that few are proof againſt the temptations which affluence throws in their way. He obſerved, that great wealth is apt to lay waſte humility, and deſtroy the wholeſome temperance and gentleneſs of manners, in which the eſſence of virtue conſiſts; therefore he thanked heaven for what he *had not*, as well as for what he *had*; and ſeemed to be as ſincere in this as in other inſtances.

M. I preſume, however, that he would not have been diſpleaſed, if his virtue had been tried.

T. Upon the whole, he conſidered his life as proſperous in all ſuch inſtances, wherein he could look backward or forward with ſatisfaction. He ſuppoſed, that his ſins and infirmities might have been much greater, had he been poſſeſſed of greater means of gratifing his vanity, or inflaming his paſſions.

M. Was it his hope of happineſs after death which chiefly influenced his conduct?

T. I believe it was, and am far from being ſure that he would have been the *worſe* man, had he been richer; but riches could not have made him *better*, if, being as he was, he did all the good in his power.

M. What part did he take, with reſpect to the politics of the nation?

T. Politics, *Mary!*——Every *tinker* is now a politician; and thinks himſelf as capable of correcting our *cuſtoms* and *laws*, and reforming our *manners*, as he is of mending our kettles. Thou mayſt conclude that a man of *reading*, or what is better, of *thinking*, founded on what he had ſeen in the world, had his opinions of right and wrong in moſt caſes: he uſed to ſay, however, that there were many affairs of ſtate, and law, which he did not underſtand, and therefore did not form any opinion; leaving them in *their* hands whoſe proper buſineſs it is to judge. He obſerved in general, that mankind ſeemed to be governed more by their *paſſions*, than their *reaſon*; that our wiſdom and folly depend on ſocial intercourſe; and that paſſions creep into our *political faith* and rule of conduct, as much as in any thing beſides—He obſerved, that it is in *politics* as in religion; if we ſet off with prejudices, it is very difficult to bring ourſelves back, let us err ever ſo much; and that in ſpite of the calmer dictates of the heart, ſuch prejudices may gain ſtrength, from the numbers which unite and encourage each other; for individuals are thus inclined to throw off all doubts, and think themſelves warranted in ſo doing.

M. I am ſenſible of the ſtrange tricks which the heart of man plays off to deceive his underſtanding and common ſenſe; but I cannot comprehend how it is conſiſtent with com-

common honeſty for parties to *ſay* what they do not think, or to *do* what their conſciences condemn?

T. This is a myſtery indeed which I could never fathom, but they all call themſelves honourable men.

M. It ſeems ſtrange, that people of diſtinction who are ſuppoſed to have ſtudied their own hearts, ſhould give ſo few proofs of being compaſſionate, moderate, juſt or candid towards others, whether they approve their politics or not.

T. Alas, my daughter, the moſt part of mankind ſtudy any thing, rather than their own hearts; and they are the blindeſt who will not ſee; for thou art to obſerve in general, that it is not ſo much from the diſlike which one man has to another, as from a partiality to himſelf; or that *want*, or ambition urges him to ſupplant another, and take his office from him if he can.

M. But how is this to be reconciled with wiſdom or uprightneſs?

T. Wiſdom, child!—it is the wiſdom of the world—I tell thee it is a myſtery to me how this can be reconciled with uprightneſs!

M. But pray, my Father, what notions had your maſter in relation to this ſubject, for in theſe days it ſeems to make a conſiderable part of the *life* and *converſation* of every *thinking* man.

T. When we come to talk of liberty, I will tell thee what his thoughts of it were.

M. In the mean time, I think I have heard you ſay that he never was *married*; how did he reconcile this with the love of his country? *Excuſe for not marrying.*

T. Very true: he thought every man *ſhould* marry, unleſs it be ſuch as can give very ſatisfactory reaſons why they ſhould not. Upon the whole he *pleaded guilty* to the charge; alledging, however, that many accidents had intervened to prevent it. He alſo confeſſed, that although he had ſtrong ſocial affections, he had been too proud, or too delicate: obſerving that Providence ſeemed to order things for the *beſt*; for ſince he could not be married to his mind, he had endeavoured to make ample ſatisfaction to his country, by devoting

voting a large portion of his time and fortune to the ſervice of the diſtreſt, of both ſexes, particularly in their *infant* ſtate.

M. Was he reputed an honeſt man?

Juſtice, a part of humanity.

T. In reſpect to his morals, if he had been influenced by no other motive than his humanity, it would have led him to be juſt. He often expreſſed a conſciouſneſs of the corruption of his heart; and inſtead of the common complaint which we hear from every one's mouth of the want of memory, among his friends he often mentioned inſtances of the defects of his *judgment*. He eſteemed thoſe talents the beſt which are the moſt uſeful to mankind. His humanity and zeal often led him ſo far, that the world had no comprehenſion of his meaning; for inſtead of a ſpur, he required a bridle; being ſometimes anxious for the good of others beyond the bounds of prudence.—The intereſted part of mankind are apt to meaſure other men's virtues by their own ſcale: My maſter had no ſiniſter motives in any thing, and therefore did not much concern himſelf about the opinion of others.

Particular diſtinction.

In ſtrength of judgment, abilities, and happineſs of expreſſion, many have exceeded him. In labour of thought, uprightneſs of intention, aſſiduity and reſources in whatever he apprehended to be advantageous for others, within the compaſs of his ſphere, I think he had not many ſuperiors.

M. Was he not eſteemed *particular?*

T. I believe he was frequently conſidered in that light. He uſed to ſay, it appeared to him, that the *glory* of a man is the exerciſe of his *reaſon*; and the glory of reaſon, the love and practice of *truth* and *candour*; and therefore he wondered how any man could entertain a thought of tranſmitting his name to poſterity, in the annals of fame, if he did not attend to this leſſon which religion and philoſophy ſo ſtrongly recommend.—Thou wilt ſoon underſtand that mankind are apt to eſteem all thoſe as *particular*, who differ from themſelves, or do not make the opinions of the generality, the meaſure of their behaviour; at the ſame time that nothing

can be more contrary to the rules of ſound wiſdom and uſeful experience than this maxim.

M. The moſt rational particularities, I ſuppoſe, are ſometimes imputed to *pride*, or contempt of the world.

T. If a perſon is conſiſtent in his conduct, and whilſt he wiſhes to be indulged himſelf, does not deſpiſe thoſe who differ from him, he may paſs unheeded. I have obſerved many with ſuperior talents, tormented with ambition, vainglory, and reſtleſs intemperance, while my maſter turned his mind to improvement in things out of the reach of common accidents. Piety and candour, probity and charity ſeemed to be his ſtudies: he uſed often to ſay, that he did not wiſh to out-live the faculties of his mind, or grow ſick of the repetition of the ſame amuſements and innocent pleaſures, or ceaſe to be affected with the emotions of ſorrow and joy. He thought it a much more melancholy conſideration that men ſhould live without virtue, than that they ſhould *die* with it: and that nothing is ſo truly glorious to a man, as uniformity in his actions, or ſo deſirable as to preſerve to the laſt, every thing that is beautiful in his character. According to the beſt of my obſervation, he was conſtant to his principles: being free from any party ſhackles, he found no difficulty in declaring his thoughts according as things appeared to him in different lights; concluding upon the whole, that thoſe cannot be in the right, who *never* found and acknowledged themſelves to be in the wrong.

Some of his acquaintance regretted him; few of them thought of him with total indifference.—With regard to a remembrancer after death, he uſed to ſay, "that a man were better forgotten, who hath nothing of greater moment to regiſter his name by, than a tomb;" yet he had his *fancy* in this reſpect, ſo far as to approve the humble notion of Sir *Thomas Friendly*, and gave orders for ſomething of the ſame kind *(a)*.

He ſaid, that all the circumſtances of his life, of which ſome had been various and intereſting; and all the events which

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which had happened, in his time, even to nations, appeared to him but as a *dream*. He abſorbed the whole, which concerned himſelf, in the conſideration of *God* and *his own ſoul*; ſaying, when he came to die, that nothing beyond this ſeemed to him to deſerve the name of *exiſtence*. After a life of above fifty years, he departed in the ſteady hope of a joyful reſurrection; praying for mercy for himſelf, and imploring the goodneſs of Providence in behalf of his fellow-ſubjects and mankind.

WEDNESDAY.

WEDNESDAY.

CONVERSATION XIII.

Deaths of Women, and ſome Female Characters deſcribed.

M. I AM in the higheſt degree obliged to you, my Father: The entertainment, as well as inſtruction which I received laſt night, will make as deep an impreſſion on my mind, as any of the other good leſſons you have given me: but as they were confined to the characters and deaths of *men*, I hope you will give me leave to make ſome enquiry in relation to my own ſex, whoſe behaviour in this ſolemn trial may affect me more; and whoſe *example* may be more directly applied to my own ſituation, when *my hour* ſhall come!

Comparative diſtinction in the merits of the ſexes.

T. It is not in my power to tell thee ſo much of thy ſex as of my own, and perhaps there is not ſo much to tell. I believe the lives of women, are comparatively moſt free from atrocious guilt; and that from a habit of obedience, they live moſt ſubmiſſively to the decrees of heaven: perhaps my partiality may incline me to this opinion; but I really think that they are leſs reluctant to die. They are not ſo deeply engaged in views of *avarice* and *ambition*; their guilt ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in *envy* and *vanity*; and theſe are ſins which women are apt to overlook, though they ſometimes lead them into monſtrous exceſſes.

M. And do not the ſame vices lead men alſo into monſtrous exceſſes?

T. Yes: but men are affected moſt by avarice and ambition.

tion. Comparative diſtinctions are ſeldom productive of any good; but I will tell thee of *one difference* which generally moſt affects a woman's heart.

M. Pray what is it?

T. Beauty!

M. Is not this chiefly owing to the weakneſs of men? They often ſhew more regard to it than to goodneſs of heart, or ſtrength of underſtanding: or any thing—except the weight of a woman's purſe. Which of the two ſexes diſcovers the greateſt want of wiſdom?

T. This is a point, *Mary*, we will wave the conſideration of, as it will be of no uſe in our preſent enquiry.

M. But, pray, which of the ſexes do you think is moſt afraid of *dying?*

T. Women are certainly the moſt timorous; they tremble moſt at a muſket-ball, or a drawn ſword: they are moſt afraid at the approach of an enemy, whom they are neither able to flee nor reſiſt: but this ſeems to be owing to the courſe of their education, and the weakneſs of their bodily frame, rather than to the weakneſs of their minds; for in the ordinary courſe of mortality, as far as I know, women uſually expreſs the leaſt fear and apprehenſion.

Death of a young woman of virtue.

M. Whether this be true or not, I hear that *Sophia* bears her illneſs with great ſtrength of mind and reſignation; but I hope it is not ſo dangerous as repreſented.

T. Alas, my dear *Mary*, I called yeſterday upon her Father, my much-loved friend *Simeon*; his eyes, which uſed to ſparkle with joy when we met, were ſunk and almoſt cloſed with grief: his hoary cheeks were bathed in tears, which flowed in more copious ſtreams as I approached him. The ſight of a friend, after ſome ſad diſaſter, ſoftens the heart, and from a kind of ſympathy in minds, makes our wounds bleed afreſh.—

M. Is *Sophia* dead?

T. The good old man ſeized my hand; he preſſed it between both his—he watered it with his tears—I immediately concluded that his daughter was dead—I would have ſpoken, but my ſorrow forbad my utterance. At laſt he ſaid, 'O my friend,

friend, it hath pleaſed heaven to chaſtiſe me for my ſins: my daughter, my much-loved child is dead!'—Then leading me into the next room, he cried, "There! there ſhe lies: Behold what one ſhort month has done! You ſaw her a few weeks ago ſmiling in health, blooming as a flower in May! Alas, how is ſhe blaſted, withered, and cut off! She was the delight of her friends, and the joy of my heart! Now behold her livid lips—feel her clay-cold cheeks—her ſpirit has taken its flight—and all my comfort is departed with it!

M. Sad news indeed! Well might a father weep for a daughter ſo deſervedly beloved by all who knew her. She was ſo good, that even envy was ſilent at the mention of her name——Did he give you any account of her death?

T. Yes: having recovered himſelf a little, he ſaid in broken words, 'She was ſenſible of her approaching change, and bore her *illneſs* with remarkable patience and ſubmiſſion to the will of God!—She retained her underſtanding to the laſt, and employed herſelf conſtantly in acts of devotion, pious meditation, and in giving good advice to her friends. She deſired us not to lament her death, but rather rejoice at her removal, as ſhe had good reaſon to hope it would be greatly to her advantage; and that we ſhould meet hereafter in a ſtate of happineſs, never to part again!'

M. I dare ſay you uſed your endeavours to comfort him: Was you able to aſſuage his ſorrow?

T. The way to mitigate grief, eſpecially upon the firſt ſtroke of ſuch a misfortune, is to indulge it: we muſt not oppoſe the torrent, but give it room to divide its force. The ſpirit muſt have time to heal its own anguiſh; yet as I knew him to be a *good man* and my friend, as ſoon as I found a proper opportunity I reminded him of her laſt words, and led him into ſome comfortable reflections upon them. I ſaid, 'Had not your daughter been ſo good a young woman, you would have had reaſon to mourn with a deep and bitter ſorrow. The death of thoſe who have neglected God, and the care of their ſouls, is indeed a ſubject of grief and lamentation; whereas your daughter's deliverance from a bad world, her ſoul being ſo fit an offering at the altar of divine mercy, muſt have been a ſong of joy to angels!—You, my friend, have

ſtood the ſhock of many changes and chances in this frail and uncertain ſtate, like a *man*, and like a *chriſtian*; perhaps heaven rewards *your* virtues, by thus ſecuring *hers*; and do not think your loſs in her is intended as a *puniſhment* to you, more than that her early death is a chaſtiſement to herſelf. Heaven is merciful in all its diſpenſations!—How hard ſoever the leſſon may ſometimes be, the Almighty ſhews the greateſt tenderneſs to us all. He who gives the ſtroke, heals the wound! If you bear the heat of the furnace, it will purge away the droſs, and purify your own ſoul. The ſharpeſt ſorrows often wean the heart from this world, and prepare it for the next. Your heavenly Father demands your ſubmiſſion to his will! It will not be long before you will follow your daughter, and dwell for ever with her, in the exalted glory of the bleſſed!

M. Did he attend to ſuch ſoothing reflections?

T. The good old man heard me with great attention; and after a deep ſigh, anſwered me: 'My friend, you have known me for many years; and may well ſuppoſe, that in the acuteſt pangs of my ſorrow, ſuch reflections have not been ſtrangers to my heart; but I feel as a *father*, and I muſt mourn.——You who have a heart to feel, have a daughter whom you dearly love, and will make allowance for my ſorrow. Heaven grant that you may never know it by experience! You will pity the weakneſs of human nature, and not impute my mournful complaints to any repugnance to the will of *God*, in humble ſubmiſſion to which my very tears bend my heart ſo much the lower. I hope my humiliation will be accepted as an offering of gratitude for the bleſſing which I once enjoyed!

'If ever the ſoul of any mortal, of my daughter's age, left its earthly habitation truly pure, my dear *Sophia* died untainted.——Her mind ſeemed poſſeſſed entirely by religion; equally ignorant of the wickedneſs and the vanities of the world, ſhe lived without fear, and died without regret!'——Here he pauſed. I anſwered, "Indeed, I acknowledge all that you have ſaid: I do not reproach you; I only think that it hath pleaſed the Almighty to reward the care of your daughter by taking her to himſelf, to ſecure

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her from the miſeries to which ſhe was ſubject.—I know that your breaſt is warm with zeal for the honour of God, and your heart devoted to his ſervice. It is only on ſuch occaſions that we learn what manner of ſpirit we are of."—He ſeemed upon this to collect his powers; "I thank you," ſaid he, "it is enough; if I have erred, I hope God will forgive me: I will endeavour to convince you that you are not miſtaken in your opinion of me, even though my grief ſhould appear to exceed the meaſure which is allowed by reaſon and religion.

Grief of a brother for a ſiſter's death.

M. Did you hear how her brother behaved himſelf on the occaſion?

T. When the Father became calm and compoſed, I made enquiry after him. I knew his affection for his ſiſter was very diſtinguiſhed, and I have a great eſteem for the youth. During the laſt ſtage of her diſtemper he was loſt in a kind of inſenſibility; but as ſoon as he heard ſhe was dead, *reaſon* began to reſume her empire, and his piety triumphed over his grief. But when her body was put into the coffin, he entered the room with ſlow and ſolemn ſteps; and leaning over her, he burſt into a flood of tears. Then, as if he meant to chaſtiſe himſelf, he ſeemed to recover; and kiſſing her cold lips, he ſaid, "O my dear ſiſter, and my dearer friend, the companion of my childhood, and my gentle monitor, art thou gone?—Haſt thou left me for *ever?* With whom ſhall I now converſe?—To whom ſhall I open my heart? Why ſhould I not follow thee? If this be all there is in death, methinks I too ſhould be glad to die!—His father, who had watched his ſteps, gently interrupted him; and taking him by the arm, prevailed on him to retire.

M. The effects of grief on ſome people are violent! I hope *his* mind is not hurt by this event?

T. I believe it is in no danger: He has been accuſtomed to a *religious* life, and the diſcipline of his paſſions. Grief, like other tender affections unreſtrained, verges to madneſs; but true religion calms this rage of ſorrow. Alas, *Mary*, there are many who become dreadful victims to this paſſion; but many more to vanity and pride! We learn how to govern

our paſſions by the actual trial and exerciſe of them, when the occaſion comes, *not merely by talking* or *by reading* of the government of them. I hope this young man will be ſo much the more endeared to his father, by the tenderneſs and manly affection which he ſhewed upon this occaſion.

Death of a young woman of ſenſe and virtue.

M. I think you was acquainted with my good friend *Margaret!*

T. I remember her well: ſhe was a very handſome young woman. Was not you a witneſs to her behaviour near the time of her death?

M. I viſited her in the laſt ſtage of her conſumption; and allowing for the weakneſs of her frame, ſhe received me with the pleaſing vivacity and amiable ſimplicity for which ſhe was diſtinguiſhed. "My dear *Mary*," ſaid ſhe, "it is a great pleaſure to me to ſee you. Your viſit gives me ſpirits, and does me *good*; I hope it will do you *good* alſo. You ſee me reduced to a very weak and languiſhing condition, for I am become a ſkeleton. The *roſes*, for which ſome weak mortals have occaſionally flattered me, as you know, are totally withered: the ſparkling eye is dim; and all my charms, if I really ever had any, are vaniſhed or turned to deformity. The flattery which has been offered me, never led me into the paths of vanity. I knew the periſhing nature of beauty, and therefore never ſet my heart upon it; nor does the loſs affect me. I am now in my twentieth year, and my days are very nearly come to an end!—There is nothing ſtrange in dying young! Many within the ſhort compaſs of my experience have been cut off in the bloom of life: ſome, who in the firſt attack of my diſtemper ſeemed to weep over *me*, are *themſelves* become inſtructive leſſons, that *youth* is no ſecurity againſt the mighty conqueror *death*. I hope I ſhould have been happy in *another ſtate*, had I been called *ſuddenly* out of *this*; for my pious parents led me, in my earlieſt days, into the paths of heaven: however, I am the more thankful for this timely notice, and for the aſſiſtance which it hath pleaſed God to grant me. You alſo are happy, far beyond many of the children of the *great* and *wealthy!* You have a *good*, as well as a *tender* father, who ſupplies the loſs of your mother; ſhe died whilſt you was yet a child. Mothers

are generally the beſt guides and guardians of their daughters: Mine has often defended me from danger: Next to the care of Providence, I owe my virtue and my peace to her prudent advice and friendly caution. Oh I could tell thee of ſuch contrivances to enſnare unwary girls, as would make thee ſhudder! Happy are thoſe young women who know the value of parents, whoſe experience enables them to preſerve their children. Let me adviſe you to conſider your father as your beſt and trueſt friend!—*Mary*, I know you pity me, becauſe I have ſo ſhort a time to live: and it would ſeem affected and abſurd were I to ſay, I pity you, becauſe at preſent it is not likely that you will die ſoon. No: my dear friend! I hope you will live long, happy in yourſelf, and happy for the reſt of the world, with whom you may be connected; but ſince it is the will of God that I ſhould leave this ſcene of tranſitory things, in theſe my early days, I am happy in conſidering death as a ſecurity againſt all the blandiſhments of vice, and the deceits of the world. When in this view I contemplate my diſſolution, it ſeems to me as a deliverance; for believe me, *Mary*, I had much rather die, than ſtain my ſoul with guilt and offend my Maker!—What is death? I do not apprehend there is any pain in dying; nor do I ſuffer any in thinking that I am leaving this world. There is nothing in the proſpect of eternity which appears to me dark and diſmal. I think I ſhall reſt in *peace*, and at the appointed time be received into glory. We are *all* equally born to die; and we are all in the hands of God unable of ourſelves to add one hour to our days of life. You are healthy, as well as young—yet how ſoon may you be nipped in the bud, and all your vernal beauties withered! But ſuppoſing that you live for forty or fifty years, whether in living ſo much longer than I ſhall do, you will be more happy, is a queſtion no mortal can decide!—We often think *That* to be good which turns out evil, and *That* to be evil which ends happily. Be you thankful for *life*, but take care *how* you live, that you may never wiſh your hour-glaſs had run out with mine. Your heart, my dear *Mary*, is formed to virtue! You have long been high in my eſteem! I ſhould be glad to confirm and im-

improve your good ſentiments, therefore I beg you to ſtore up in your heart the dying words of your moſt true, affectionate and tender friend.

It is now about three years, *Mary*, ſince I entered into a more ſtrict and ſolemn examination of my heart, my life, my opinion, and conduct, than I had ever done before. In conſequence of this, I devoted all the faculties of my ſoul, and all my ſtrength to the ſervice of my Maker! I confirmed my promiſes at the communion of the Lord's Supper, which I have ſince regularly attended. The times and opportunities of public and private prayer, were always acceptable to me.—Weak and imperfect as my devotions have been, they were crowned with pleaſure; and I have endeavoured, with humble dependance on the grace of God, to converſe with ſimplicity and ſincerity, and to live ſoberly and righteouſly. I feel the happy fruits of it in the comfort which now glows in my breaſt, and in the peace which my mind enjoys!—O *Mary*, let God be the firſt and conſtant object of your affection: let the world go as it may, think of thy *end!* What ſhould I now be the better, if I were the miſtreſs of *both the Indias?* I would not give a grain of virtue for all the wealth of all the world! The caſe will certainly be the ſame to *you* on your *death-bed:* therefore, for heaven's ſake, be on your guard! Let nothing tempt you to do wrong. Your hour will come as *certainly*, though probably not ſo ſoon as mine. I conjure you, by the affection you bear to me; by the love you have for your own ſoul; and for the ſake of Chriſt, whoſe blood was ſpilt for us all!—I conjure you, as you love and honour your father, and hope to reach the manſions of eternal bliſs, or fear to fall into everlaſting miſery with the children of diſobedience, that you walk in the paths of your religion!" She then ceaſed, as if unable to ſay more.

T. O happy girl!—How fragrant is thy memory!—Thou ſeeſt, *Mary*, that ſhe had been uſed to conſider life as hanging by a very ſlender thread, and not as the generality of mankind, who act as if they held it by a tenure ſtronger than *time*, and out of the reach of *accidents*. This is the ſad cauſe why ſo many put off their repentance to the laſt remains of life; and though experience proves, that in ſickneſs

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the body is hardly able to bear its own infirmities, or the mind to preſerve itſelf from peeviſhneſs, they preſume on ſtrength and ability to heal all the wounds which ſin and folly have made in their ſouls! But tell me, my dear *Mary*, what part didſt thou act in this affecting ſcene? What reply didſt thou make to ſuch expreſſions of goodneſs, which flowed from the heart of thy kind friend and monitor?

M. I was unable to utter many words: my tears ſpoke my gratitude and love—Indeed I told her in broken accents, that I ſhould always cheriſh a dear remembrance of her friendſhip; that her advice was engraven on my heart, never to be effaced; that I would always look up to her as an *example* and *model* for the conduct of my life; and therefore ſhe could not fail to live in my memory!

T. I hope thou wilt keep thy promiſe ſacred, and obſerve it with zeal and conſtancy. We have already had occaſion to take notice, that in making ſuch viſits, it is uſual to flatter the patient with the deluſive proſpect of recovery, againſt our better judgment: Didſt *thou* flatter *Margaret*?

M. No indeed, my Father: I ſhould have thought it unfriendly and unjuſt: I apprehend, that thoſe who are inſenſible of their danger, ſhould be informed of it in proper terms, that whether they *live* or *die*, they may prepare for death; and they who ſee their danger, ſhould be encouraged in their reſignation. She ſaw her diſſolution approaching, and was prepared for it.—It would have been cruel, if not deceitful, to draw her mind off from the great object on which it was ſo firmly fixed. Nor had I any temptation to do it, for I rather envied than pitied her condition.—She lived but few days after this, and expired with her hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, with the piety and reſignation of a ſaint!—I pray God that I may yield up my breath with the ſame compoſure and tranquility.

Death of a French lady of ſuperior virtue.

T. There are many inſtances of women who have ſhewn remarkable reſolution and greatneſs of mind in the hour of death. My maſter has frequently talked of the courage and fortitude of your ſex upon ſuch occaſions: he uſed to tell a ſtory of a

French Lady (a), which always ſtruck me as an inſtance of true generoſity of ſpirit. Being out of order, ſhe ſent for a ſurgeon to bleed her: This perſon, whoſe condition was much inferior to the lady's, was known to have entertained a *ſecret* paſſion for her. Upon uncovering her arm, he was much confuſed, and ſhe obſerved it; however, with great affability, ſhe deſired him to go on in his work, and he cut an *artery* inſtead of opening a *vein*.

M. Good heaven! what was the conſequence?

T. He immediately found his miſtake, and uſed all the means in his power for her recovery, but in vain: the lady ſoon became ſenſible that ſhe muſt die; but far from reproaching the unhappy man, who was the innocent cauſe, ſhe ſaw his anguiſh with pity, and ſubmitted calmly. She went ſtill farther; for thinking that this event would injure his reputation as a ſurgeon, ſhe made a handſome proviſion for him in her *will*; and died with that greatneſs of mind, which a good underſtanding, ſupported by the noble ſentiments of chriſtian piety and generoſity, inſpires!—Was not this truly heroical? Doſt think thou ſhouldſt have acted ſo under the like circumſtances?

Reflection. *M.* I admire the behaviour, and hope I ſhould imitate it. The *good* part of my ſex, I believe has generally a partiality for men, by whom they think themſelves beloved: but in this caſe, *compaſſion* and *charity* came in aid to love, and triumphed over the world: the lady ſaw the *hand of heaven* point out the way to everlaſting bliſs, and ſhe *followed it!*

T. Thou knoweſt that women are generally called the devout ſex; and it ſeems as if they were more reſolute, or more patient than men. A ſtrong inclination to piety, and the conſtant practice of religious duties, will produce this glorious effect.—I have told thee there is nothing great, even in martyrdom, wherein women have not been in all ages diſtinguiſhed: And why, my dear *Mary*, ſhouldſt not *thou* be as ready to die for the glory of God, and the welfare of thine own ſoul, as the greateſt of the daughters of women?

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(a) mentioned in the Spectator.

I could point out many examples, but thou art not likely to be called to any ſevere trial.——It is now ſufficient to remind thee of thy dear mother's death: She ſeemed perfectly reconciled, as if ſhe was happily arrived at her journey's end; after travelling through the rough ways of penury, and weathering the ſtorms of affliction. Happily for her, ſhe had lived an *honeſt* and a *religious* life; her mind was in peace; ſhe was full of the hopes of the rewards of her virtue, and looked up to the *finiſher of her faith*, even Chriſt, her Redeemer! She had conſtantly and ſteadfaſtly fixed her eye on a judgment to come; and this furniſhed her with ſuch principles of action, as can be learnt no other way. Having always *thought of death familiarly*, therefore ſhe did not *fear* it. Indeed, ſhe was ſo truly good and full of hope, that to my imagination, in thoſe early days, ſhe appeared to aſcend the clouds in triumph! O my daughter, may thy death, where'er it comes, be like her's: Thou wilt then moſt aſſuredly die the death of the righteous!——But—why do I wander back ſo many years, and ſet my wounds a bleeding? Thou, my child, art her image! May thy *mind* reſemble her's!—Mayſt thou walk continually in her ſteps, and with her, ſhine as the ſtars of heaven!

Death of a good mother and a good chriſtian in humble life.

M. O my Father, may *heaven* grant your prayer!—Your words inſpire me with the love of God! How glorious is *virtue*, even in poverty and affliction! And how wretched the triumphs of wealth and grandeur, when unſupported by a conſcious integrity!—I have been hitherto fortunate in my acquaintance; though taught, by *ſad* experience, that our happineſs, in this mortal ſtate, is very precarious.

I ſhall never forget my good friend, the 'Squire's niece: ſhe too was my patroneſs: I mean the ſweet *Amelia*, who was ſo much diſtinguiſhed! Her modeſty could be equalled by nothing but the gracefulneſs of her ſmiles, and the benignity of her temper. She was moſt dutiful to her parents; diligent in all ſhe undertook; never at a loſs for *employment*; never out of humour for any croſs accident. Her own paſſions being always calm, ſhe was a guide and monitor to her kin-

A finiſhed character in early life.

French Lady (a), which always ſtruck me as an inſtance of true generoſity of ſpirit. Being out of order, ſhe ſent for a ſurgeon to bleed her: This perſon, whoſe condition was much inferior to the lady's, was known to have entertained a *ſecret* paſſion for her. Upon uncovering her arm, he was much confuſed, and ſhe obſerved it; however, with great affability, ſhe deſired him to go on in his work, and he cut an *artery* inſtead of opening a *vein*.

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dred and acquaintance. Unpractiſed in the arts of *falſhood* and *cunning*, *flattery* and *inſinuation*, ſhe was affable and polite; and by the power of her diſcourſe and the mildneſs of her temper, ſhe commanded the affections of all her acquaintance. She ſung delightfully, but ſhe declined ſinging, except in the company of her parents or relations. Her winning ſoftneſs was attended with a turn of mind, as ſerious as uncommon: the ſentiments ſhe committed to writing, which were found after her death, abundantly proved how juſtly ſhe thought of her own diſſolution; and how much her heart was devoted to her Maker. Thus, as if heaven had mark'd her for its own, by filling up the meaſure of her virtue, ere ſhe had well ſeen *twenty years*, ſhe was called to the ſociety of her kindred angels. O what a loſs the world ſuſtained in her! And, if I may preſume to think ſo highly of any mortal, what a *gain* was made to the choir of angels!

T. Thou art enraptur'd, child! But I am glad to hear thee do ſo much juſtice to ſo amiable a character, and wiſh I could point out any one of my own ſex, who having died at ſo early an age, poſſeſſed ſo much virtue.

M. Was it not *unhappy* that ſhe died ſo young?

Reflection.

T. God only knows; a ſmall number of years, *Mary*, is enough to take a view of the world: the moſt happy find but little variety of unmixed pleaſure in it. Life affords but little more time than to prepare for death: for hardly do the eldeſt diſcover *the key of life*, before they are entering *the gates* of death!

A judicious education, the foundation of the virtue of children.

Amelia poſſeſſed all the virtues thou haſt related of her: She had enjoyed the advantages of a *good education*——I mean ſuch as moſt improves the heart, and enlarges the underſtanding.

From the earlieſt part of life, her parents taught her to conſider human nature with reverence and reſpect; and conſequently to be tender and charitable to all the world.——Whilſt they cheriſhed a ſpirit of benevolence, ſhe learnt to be modeſt and gentle in manners.—They always indulged her in rational amuſements neceſſary to health and chearfulneſs; but as ſoon as ſhe was

capable

capable of inſtruction, ſhe was accuſtomed to diligence and application, and carefully reproved in whatever appeared to be amiſs.

They were careful during her childhood, that their ſervants ſhould not promiſe her any rewards of particular kinds of food; recommending the advantages of indifference, as to the quality of what we eat or drink, provided it be good and wholeſome: Nor would they ever ſpeak to her of fine clothes, that they might not raiſe in her breaſt the paſſions of pride and vanity!

Their firſt object was to inſpire her tender mind with a juſt ſenſe of *truth* and *uprightneſs*; acquainting her, as ſoon as ſhe could form any glimmering notion of God, that he loved *truth*, and would moſt highly reward it; that he hated falſhood and evaſion, and all the arts of fraud and cunning; and would certainly puniſh them with as great ſeverity; telling her that the ingenuous confeſſion of a fault entitled her to *honour* and *commendation:* and that as it is juſtly ſaid, "a fault once known is half cured," they aſſured her, that for the very reaſon of her goodneſs in *confeſſing*, ſhe would naturally be ſo much the more on her guard, not to commit the ſame fault again.

Their next conſideration was to inculcate a reverence for the *ſacred writings*; giving her only ſuch parts to read, as ſhe could comprehend, and very little at a time, explaining to her the ſenſe and meaning, in ſuch terms as to make it pleaſing to her.

They encouraged all rational enquiries, and checked every ſuggeſtion which could in any degree favour *enthuſiaſm* or *ſuperſtition*; at the ſame time endeavouring to imprint theſe great truths on her mind,

1. That the proper life of man is *eternity*, our preſent days being ſubject to end by every little accident.
2. That *God* is the *Father* of men, and *heaven* their *home*.
3. That we are ſo little able to do any thing of ourſelves, without the aid and aſſiſtance of the great Lord of all, that we cannot make a hair of the head white or black!
4. After ſhewing her the vanity of the world, with regard to the uncertainty of every thing in it, as ſhe grew up

they carried her to the conſideration of the vaſt importance of the *ſoul*, and what had been done for it; even ſo far, that the Son of God ſuffered an *ignominious death upon the croſs*, that it might be ſaved from *everlaſting death:* and as a proof of his Almighty power, and to convince us that we ſhould all riſe from the grave, he aroſe from the dead the third day after his crucifixion.

5. Far from thinking that children are incapable of *attention* to ſerious converſation, they early habituated her to heavenly ſubjects, introduced however in a *chearful* and judicious manner, and rather exciting a curioſity and thirſt of knowledge, than creating any degree of impatience or diſguſt.

After being taught to ſhew an implicit obedience to their commands, the *power* and *practice* of *attention* at length became eaſy and familiar to her.

She had the advantage of ſeeing that her father and mother were, in every inſtance, exactly of the ſame mind; for if they differed in any reſpect, they took care ſhe ſhould be kept ignorant of it.

As *they underſtood* every thing they wiſhed *ſhe* ſhould learn, ſo *they did* every thing which they deſired ſhe ſhould *imitate*; removing from her ſight, every object which could taint her tender mind.

They choſe ſervants with great caution, giving them a ſtrict charge with regard to what they ſaid or did in her preſence, endeavouring to inſpire them with the ſame love of virtue as they cultivated in her mind.

They were ſenſible that *children* form their tempers, derive their virtue, and not unfrequently even acquire the ſtrength of their underſtanding, from the precepts and example of parents.

M. It is no wonder that after ſuch caution, *Amelia* ſhould have lived and died ſo much like an angel. How happy would it be for the world, if all parents took the ſame pains, and gave ſuch genuine proof of rational affection towards their children! But how do you think, my Father, this is poſſible to be done?

T. Thou art not to imagine but that ſometimes the beſt the

and moſt careful parents have very *untoward children*; as on the contrary, the very worſt may have children who are diſtinguiſhed for virtue; but I fear the laſt is a rare caſe.

Example ever hath been, and ever will be, more prevalent than *precept:* Of this thou wilt be ſenſible, when I relate to thee a melancholy ſtory of the moſt intereſting kind, in the laſt hours of a fine lady.

Reflections on life.

To live with a conſtant view to death, is ſo much the object of the wiſe, that they ſtand amazed at the buſtle which is made about things of no duration, or ſuch as by no means fill up the natural longings of the ſoul. That which perverts the mind, and turns it aſide from the true path in which the Almighty requires us to walk, muſt be evil.

Many of the duties of life depend on our rank, but ſtill thou mayſt receive inſtruction from the conduct of a *ſuperior*. I apprehended this lady had been once a great favourite of my maſter, but I never found that he could make a convert of her, in the days of her *health*. The firſt interview in her ſickneſs affected him very much, and he committed what was ſaid to writing.

M. You call her a *fine lady!* Pray what am I to underſtand by this diſtinction?

Deſcription of a fine lady.

T. Formerly I have heard that a *fine lady* meant an accompliſhed woman; a woman, who with the *virtues* of a *chriſtian*, enjoyed all the advantages of a ſuperior education; courteous, affable, polite and generous, and fit to ſpeak properly to a *prince*, or to a *beggar:* but cuſtom has changed our language, and now it is generally underſtood to ſignify a woman who decorates her perſon with rich attire; is proud, affected, and fantaſtical, neglects the ſimplicity of manners, which of all things in life has the moſt charms; ſhews little attention to domeſtic or religious duties; is awake when ſhe ſhould be aſleep, and ſleeps when ſhe ſhould be awake: devotes her heart to the love of applauſe of people no wiſer than herſelf; ſpends her time with them in a round of trifling amuſements, till at length being ſatiated, and out of humour, ſhe grows indifferent to all things in the world, one excepted.

M. What is that, my Father? *T.* She

T. She would ſtill be gladly thought *virtuous*; provided the notion of virtue be confined to chaſtity.

M. According to your deſcription, a fine lady is a *fooliſh woman*.

T. Such as *we* are, my dear *Mary*, muſt take care what we ſay; but to tell thee a ſecret, there are many called *fine ladies* who are fooliſh women, and ſome *very fine ladies* who are *very fooliſh women:* yet do not imagine but that a conſiderable part of ſuch as paſs under this general name, have good hearts and ſuperior underſtandings; and ſome poſſeſs every virtue which can adorn human nature, except reſolution to break the chains of cuſtom. If they were to follow the true dictates of their own minds, they would guide *their inferiors* by the ſhining light of the brighteſt example.

M. What pity it is, that ſuch as diſcern *good*, ſhould follow *evil*; and knowing the ſuperior advantages of the freedom of the mind, make themſelves ſlaves to the humour of thoſe who are enthralled by their own devices! But pray, my Father, how are we to diſtinguiſh the *fine ladies* who have underſtanding, and diſcover wherein folly conſiſts, from thoſe who are blind and ignorant?

T. By their *words* and *geſtures*; and perchance by ſome of their *actions*; for in their dreſs, their fondneſs for trifles, their paſſionate love of amuſements, and ſome other particulars, they ſeem to reſemble each other very much; at leaſt I thought ſo when I had an opportunity of making my obſervations, which happened almoſt every day of my life.

Death and confeſſion of a fine lady.

To explain this matter, the lady in queſtion had many amiable qualities, nor was ſhe ignorant of the advantages of virtue; but ſhe followed the train of fair triflers, and was devoted to others much inferior to herſelf in underſtanding. She was ſenſible, affable and polite; and, in good hands, might have made a moſt valuable woman. Her frame was too tender to bear an inceſſant change every night from *cold* to *hot*, and from *ſweet* to *tainted* air; and, like many others, received her death's-wound in a theatre. My maſter uſed to call a crowded aſſembly, or a cloſe room of company, a well-dreſſed mob.

When ſhe found herſelf in danger, her eyes were ſuddenly

denly opened. She was not ignorant of my maſter's great partiality for her: ſhe conſidered him as her friend: ſhe thought well of his opinion; but as a proof of her inconſiſtency, ſhe had not regarded it in *practice*: in this extremity, ſhe deſired the favour of ſeeing him. Though much diſpleaſed with her conduct, he readily attended on the mournful occaſion. After ſome compliments, ſhe ſaid, "You ſee me here in very great danger of dying ſoon—You have been very good to me on many occaſions: I am ſenſible of the ſincerity with which you have intereſted yourſelf for me, in the moſt important concern of my life!" Here ſhe pauſed, and with a deep ſigh continued, "Would to God I had taken your advice!—O what a miſerable ſtate to live and die in *folly!*—It is not that I am conſcious of any thing the *world* condemns, but I am now ſenſible of the ſubſtantial meaning of the world's being at *enmity with God!* How have I ſquandered my *precious time*, as if I meant to give up my hopes of immortality for the play-thing of a child; a play-thing, at which even the minds of children ſicken with the dull repetition of enjoyment——Alas! my friend, what pleaſure can be found fit for a rational, intelligent, immortal mind, where *reaſon* and *immortality* are ſo little regarded? I now feel the greater *ſurprize* from the length of my *dream!* O *wiſdom*, where was I, when I ſought thee not: the neglect of thy admonitions now aggravates my offences!—And O, my honoured friend, why could not I diſcern the truth, as well as you, or why did I not practice what I knew?"—He anſwered, "Do not ſuffer your *ſelf-reproaches*, madam, to aggravate your preſent anguiſh, on account of my endeavours to ſerve you. It is true, that had you walked in the paths I pointed out, had I been maſter of the world, it would have been yours; and yet I believe in *theory* we did not differ much." To which, after ſome pauſe, ſhe replied, "True: I was ſenſible that you was in the right; I diſcerned the truth, as applicable to mankind at large; but I was ſo ſilly to imagine (as far as I thought at all) that ſuch as myſelf might challenge a kind of privilege of exemption from the rules which

which you ſo earneſtly recommended to me. I now look up to the heights to which I ought to have aſpired; and behold the mean and *groveling* ſituation of my ſoul! I now envy the condition of that *honeſt girl*, your ſervant's daughter, of whoſe good diſpoſition you have ſometimes ſpoken. What infernal magic enchanted my mind?"——Here ſhe ſighed, and continued, "Whether we attempt to diſguiſe folly, by covering ourſelves with *brocade*, or *allapine*; whether we play the fool by the light of a thouſand *bougies*, or a ſingle tallow candle, the dignity, the conſcience of a rational Being muſt be the ſame. It is not *crowded aſſemblies*, or *theatres*, or *ſilly maſquerades*; the counting *beads*, or counting *pips*: Theſe things may be indifferent, if uſed innocently. If it ſhould pleaſe the Almighty, contrary to my expectation, to reſtore me again to health, I do not tell you that I would retire from the commerce of all human beings; no: I ſee the duty of convivial joys, and ſuch intercourſe as is truly ſocial and beneficent: nor can the wiſeſt be totally free from folly; for in ſpite of philoſophy, life will abound in *trifles*. I dance, and ſpeak the languages of *France* and *Italy*; I play on the harpſichord and ſing: The errors of my life do not ariſe from theſe accompliſhments; nor ſurely is there any harm in deſigns of manual art, or ingenious needlework. The apparent guilt conſiſts in devoting ſo much time to puerile purſuits, and vain amuſements, and ſo little to the great buſineſs of eternity!

Indeed I am conſcious that I have been negligent of inſtruction, and declined thoſe rational taſks which I was otherwiſe qualified to execute, even to the guiding and directing other people. I have ſhewn a pernicious example of idleneſs and levity, and ſullied all that is beautiful in my character. When I look back on the *many* years I have ſpent in a giddy round of *unprofitable pleaſures*, with hardly any mixture of *ſubſtantial good*; when I reflect on the hecatombs I have offered at the altars of vanity and diſſipation, to ſay nothing of other offences, I am ſorrowful and aſhamed; my heart bleeds with contrition!"——Here ſhe pauſed:——Conſcious of her negligence, tears ran down her cheeks.—But recovering herſelf,

ſelf, ſhe proceeded—"How little, how very little have I *read*, and how much leſs have I *thought*, on ſubjects which would now be my greateſt comfort.—I have indeed contemplated the works of nature, in the flattery of my *mirror*; and ſought for happineſs in places of public reſort, but I never found it. What joy could I find in *ſuch purſuits?* Had I *adored* my Maker, as he diſplays himſelf in the grandeur of his works, and the order of his providence, I might have been *happy!* Alas how little have I thought of the blood of That Saviour, whoſe *example* was ſo foreign to my *practice!* I can ſcarce perſuade myſelf I ſeriouſly believed the terms on which he has promiſed immortal happineſs to his followers! Here I feel the ſting: it pains me bitterly;—how ſhall I extract the venom?—Tell me, what ſhall I do?—In what dreſs ſhall I now appear, to humble myſelf before God?—Where ſhall I ſeek a ſupply for my expiring lamp, or purchaſe the heavenly incenſe of a pious heart? O my friend—My time has winged its flight beyond the reach of mortal call——To unboſom to you the *ſad ſecret of my ſoul*, I have not accuſtomed myſelf to think that conſtant, regular, and fervent prayer was any eſſential part of the buſineſs of my life!—"O God, forgive my negligence and folly!"——Here ſhe breathed a mournful ſigh, which ſeemed to pierce her heart, and pauſing for ſome time, continued, "After I was ten years of age, my parents never regarded whether I prayed or not: They left me to myſelf when I was too young and giddy to act rationally, and like a chriſtian. How their account now ſtands, heaven knows!——For my part, I muſt plead *guilty* for my ſhare in this *dreadful negligence.*—Tell me, I beſeech you, *what* I ſhould think, and *how* I ſhould implore the mercy of heaven?"——To this he anſwered, "Madam, you ſpeak the language of repentance with ſuch ſenſibility, that I hope your guilt does not riſe ſo high as you repreſent it. In the eye of the world, nothing can atone for the want of chaſtity in women, though in the ſight of heaven, *repentance* has no ſex: but your *penitential ſorrows* do not concern what is vulgarly called your *honour:* it is your want of piety, and the trifling manner in

which you have waſted your life, by gratifying your eyes and ears, inſtead of improving your underſtanding; but do not therefore indulge any diſtruſt of the mercy of God. I hope the ſenſe which you entertain of your offences, creates ſuch contrition in your heart, as will render it an offering fit for heaven! If my prayers had wings, far ſwifter than the morning light, my zeal in your ſervice would ſtill add redoubled ſpeed to their efforts!"

To this ſhe replied, "Methinks you attempt to heal a wound which is *incurable*. Comfort beſtowed on thoſe who deſerve it, may prove the goodneſs of the heart and underſtanding; but how ſtrange it is that women are to be flattered even in death, as if *truth* were of too pure original to be the ſubject of their thoughts! And that *you*, Sir, who are my friend, ſhould now flatter *me!*"

He anſwered, "My dear madam, conſider: is comforting the diſtreſſed, *flattery?* With regard to the cure of your diſeaſe, you urge me to adminiſter corroſive medicines: I will preſcribe any thing I think right which can afford you relief. If the proper uſe of *reaſon* is to *act* reaſonably, as often as you have failed in this, however juſtly you may have thought, it only proved that you was formed with abilities which you miſapplied. This was the ſubject of *my ſorrow* in the days of your health and folly; and I ſhould be duller than the weed which poets feign to grow upon the banks of *Lethe*, had I forgotten how often my heart has bled, when I foreſaw what you would think upon the bed of ſickneſs or death. You will forgive me when I ſay that your form appeared to me angelic—and your diſcourſe almoſt tempted me to think your negligence no crime; but in my *reflecting hours*, in ſpite of my partiality, I ſaw how grievouſly you miſapplied your time, and how much you degraded yourſelf. *You* diſobeyed the laws of *your* nature, when creatures of mere inſtinct obeyed *theirs*.

Far be it from me to lull you, in theſe awful hours, into any fond preſumption, as if you had not the greateſt need of the mercies of heaven: but believe me, I think yours are true tears of contrition, and I hope they will waſh out your ſtains. My heart is ſtill devoted to you; and the more

uſe-

useful my services can be, the more comfort I shall receive whilst I sympathize in your sorrows: and let me, in the name of the tender Father of mankind, entreat you to fix your thoughts on his boundless mercies, through the intercession of the great Prophet and Saviour of the world, who died for sinners that repent! You have been exposed to the contagious disease which preys on a thoughtless generation. Unmindful of the nature of sin, they do not consider the omission of *good* as the commission of *evil*. The gay world, in their hours of laughter, will not easily allow of this doctrine: You now discern the truth, and happy it is you do! Be calm, and offer your heart to God, and hope he will accept it!

She replied, 'Forgive me, if I have trespassed—my mind was agitated: I reproached you inconsiderately.—You are my friend indeed; and you offer me all the comfort my sad condition will admit of!—Then pausing for some time, she said, "O God, send me thy aid! Look down from thy exalted throne on me a miserable being: thou gavest me the reason of man, and I have acted with the *foolishness* of a child: happy should I now be, if I had been in all respects as innocent! O calm the troubles of my soul. Thou hast beheld my errors, and thou, omniscient Father, knowest my sufferings for them! I see the vanity and wickedness of my life, and lament the folly of it in tears of bitterness and pain!—Let not that precious blood, which was shed for the sins of the *whole* world, be spilt in vain for me!——Behold the anguish of my heart, and save me for thy mercies sake!

M. This poor lady must surely have had a true consciousness how ill she had employed her time, and how little like a christian she had acted.

T. She now spent her hours in prayer, and hearing the scriptures, often acknowledging of *some* parts that they were entirely *new* to her, and of *others* that she had never rightly comprehended them before. In this interval, she commemorated the death of Christ several times; and in less than fourteen days she died, lamented and beloved in her exit, though so much of her life had passed in negligence and folly.

M. The deſcription which you have given, diſtreſſes me exceedingly; it makes my heart bleed to think how a woman of the beſt education, and, I ſuppoſe, enjoying all the advantages of a liberal fortune, may hazard her ſoul in the purſuit of *trifles!* But if we conſider alſo the ſuperior underſtanding, and admirable temper of this lady, the wonder is ſo much the greater.

T. Thou ſhouldſt not imagine that ſuch misfortunes are confined to the *noble* or the *gentle*; one often ſees the ſame part acted by perſons of an inferior condition.—My couſin *Lucy* was a fine lady *in her ſtation:* She was one among the many thouſands, who have ſome virtues blended with many faults: She could not properly be called vicious, but ſhe was very far from being virtuous. In ſhort, ſhe did not act as if ſhe remembered her *end*; and therefore could hardly avoid doing amiſs. She ſeemed to delight only in mirth and feſtivity, muſic, dancing, and public ſhews: Thus, inſtead of improving her *underſtanding*, correcting her *will*, and becoming the more attentive to *admonition*, and learning to be *humble*, *devout*, and *uſeful*, ſhe ſoon acquired the reputation of a *giddy* girl. In the ſame degree that ſhe neglected theſe virtues, they became taſteleſs and inſipid, and ſhe had no heart for them. Having forgotten wherein her higheſt excellency conſiſted, ſhe could neither look backward with any true ſatisfaction, nor forward with any joyful confidence. She thought very little of any thing but the amuſement of the preſent moment, and I cannot ſay ſhe ever appeared much diſturbed. Death at length *ſurprized her*; and *ſurprized* we all muſt be, if we do not live as if the preſent day might be the laſt our eyes will ever viſit. She went through the common ceremonies of *phyſicians*, *nurſes*, and *friends*, with as much decency as generally attends a death-bed, where the chief concern is to adminiſter medicines to the ſick.

Death of a young woman in the common track of modern life.

Reflection. God forbid that I ſhould ſit in judgment on her ſoul; but neither could I ever find any ſolid foundation whereon to reſt my hopes! The beſt that can be ſaid is, that ſhe *meditated no harm* to other people.

The

The inconſiſtencies which we every day behold in the lives of the greateſt part of mankind; the conſciouſneſs of our own infirmities; and the charity which our divine religion requires at our hands, muſt hold the balance of mercy and juſtice. We learn, from ſelf-love, to meaſure the wants of others by our own, and to compaſſionate what we cannot relieve. Few live as they might; none are *perfect*. We ſee our friends and acquaintance continually dropping into the grave, yet many of us go on in the height of careleſſneſs.

Thou ſeeſt, my daughter, how neceſſary it is that one part of mankind ſhould preach up religion and philoſophy to the other; for otherwiſe we ſhould be all undone!

Character of a young gentlewoman of diſtinguiſhed ſenſe and virtue.

Let us change the ſubject, *Mary*, and talk of the *good* and *virtuous!* Thou hadſt a high reſpect for thy friend and patroneſs the amiable *Eleanor!*

M. Alas, my Father, I cannot ſpeak of her without ſorrow! When I was yet a child, ſhe ſhewed me ſuch countenance, and though but a year or two my elder, ſhe gave me ſuch inſtruction as won my heart. I believe ſhe hardly exceeded *eighteen years* when ſhe died.

T. Thou doſt not know that half of the human ſpecies go out of the world in the courſe of about *fifteen years (a)*. In one ſenſe it might be ſaid, that *Eleanor* lived not *half her days*, yet it is certain that ſhe filled up the time that heaven had appointed for her. It was her happineſs to have run her courſe of virtue at an early age, and the great Arbiter of life and death was pleaſed to call her to reſt!—It ſhould give us but little concern how *ſhort* our paſſage is through life, provided it be *ſafe*. Travellers ſeldom complain of coming too ſoon to their journey's end; and ſhe who died well, lived long enough for *herſelf*, and we muſt leave the world in the hands of God.

M. True, my Father; but you will allow me to mourn that ſhe left us ſo ſoon; and ſome misfortunes are not ſo eaſily conquered by the *heart* as by the *tongue*. I know not whether my reſpect, or affection for her, was greateſt: She was high in the eſteem of all her acquaintance. The cha-

racter

(a) Of 1000 born, 498 are dead by the age of 15.

racter given of her by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, was expreſſed in theſe words:

In the bloſſom of her life, her virtues diffuſed a ſweet fragrance.

She was conſtantly employed in domeſtic offices, and all other duties which could grace the character of an excellent young gentlewoman.

Few excelled her in the uſe of the needle and the pencil: her taſte was delicate, and her judgment diſcerning.

The affection which ſhe ſhewed towards her kindred and relations, conſtituted an amiable part of her character.

She was affable to every one: ready to hear the tale of *diſtreſs*, and to wipe away the tear of *ſorrow*: the law of kindneſs flowed from her lips, and furniſhed a healing balm to the wounds of the afflicted.

As ſhe felt for the miſeries of others, ſhe exerted all her power for their relief.

Thoſe whom ſhe could not praiſe, ſhe ſpoke of with a tenderneſs which expreſſed univerſal benevolence.

Having a lively ſenſe of the goodneſs of God, ſhe entertained a firm perſuaſion that there is no affliction for which religion has not provided a remedy; nor any duty to which Providence has not annexed a bleſſing.

She worſhipped the Almighty in public with fervor, gratitude, and joy; and her private devotion afforded her mind no leſs comfort and delight.

She read the ſacred writings with attention, conſidering them as the oracles of heaven, on which her temporal and eternal happineſs depended. The ſermons of moſt of our eminent divines were alſo familiar to her, and ſhe talked with great propriety of their reſpective merits.

All romantic ſtories and novels ſhe avoided as dangerous to purity and true ſimplicity; but ſhe delighted in hiſtory, which ſerved at once to amuſe, improve, and enlarge her mind.

Guarded againſt the extremes of *melancholy* and *careleſſneſs*, ſhe poſſeſſed her ſoul in that happy chearfulneſs and compoſure, which are the ordinary companions of innocence, and the beſt inſtructors how to live or die; employing

ploying every hour in a manner moſt ſuitable to the indulgence of Providence, with regard to the rank in which ſhe was placed.

In the gifts of nature ſhe was not leſs happy, being in temper ſweet, in manners gentle, in converſation pleaſing, and in voice melodious.

Native ſimplicity, and the love of truth, ſecured her from affectation; while the ſuperiority of her underſtanding preſerved her from vanity and pride.

With her gentleneſs of diſpoſition, ſhe had a large portion of *courage*, which ſhe wiſely thought neceſſary to her conduct; well knowing, that nothing can embitter life ſo much as *fear*; nor any thing be more *fantaſtic* than the falſe terrors, which are often taken for *delicacy of manners in women*.

She was ſenſible that *religion*, and the due conſideration that *man* is born to die, are the only means of conquering the unmanly paſſion of fear.

The calmneſs with which ſhe diſcourſed on her own death, gave proof of the ſtrength of her mind, whilſt her reſignation was expreſſive of her confidence in the mercy of *God*, through the interceſſion of the Redeemer of the world; and the ſame ſentiments and tranquility of ſpirit which rendered her life ſo amiable, attended her in her expiring moments.

Thus her life glided away in a pure and gentle ſtream; her example being a pattern of imitation moſt worthy the attention of the humble in condition, as well as of the moſt elevated in rank and ſtation: And thus the ſorrow of her lamenting friends is calmed by the joyful aſſurance that the end of her exiſtence is accompliſhed, and ſhe numbered with the juſt.

T. I am ſenſible of the truth and candour of this account. *Reflections on grief.*

M. You would not think it ſtrange, my Father, if my remembrance of her virtues ſhould furrow my cheeks with tears.

T. Griefs which are ſoft and gentle, rather heal than wound the ſpirit, and there can be no bitterneſs in thine: there

There are many reaſons why thou ſhouldſt diſpel the cloud of ſorrow: She hath happily eſcaped the dangers with which this life abounds.—Calm and ſerene, in peaceful purity and unmixed hope, ſhe paſſed to the regions of eternal joy! What a plentiful ſource of conſolation is this! Think of being out of the reach of affliction (as thy friend *Margaret* told thee) and what is more, beyond the poſſibility of offending God! Thou, my child, knoweſt not the dangerous ſmiles of a treacherous world. Comfort thyſelf: "*Tears* will not water the lovely plant to make it grow again.—*Sighs* will not give *her* new breath; nor canſt thou furniſh her with life and ſpirits, by the waſte of thine own!"

M. We do not weep in any preſumption that our tears will avail; but tears are the natural effects of ſorrow, and the greateſt relief to an over-burthened heart, and therefore we weep.

T. Grief is oftentimes the effect of virtue, but to mourn above meaſure, is folly or iniquity.

M. This I grant; but not to grieve at all, you will allow, gives ſtrong evidence of groſs inſenſibility.

T. Yes; but we muſt not complain that our joys have been *ſhort*, when we had no right to them for the time we were really bleſſed. Let not the loſs thou haſt ſuffered turn to thine own diſadvantage, but be thankful to thy Maker for thy portion of good; and under all the diſpenſations of Providence, remember thy conſtant prayer, *Thy will, O God, be done!*—To *Eleanor*, virtue was grey hairs, and an unſpotted life, old age! Let the remembrance of thy obligations, and her good qualities, live in thine heart: think of her *happineſs*, and in that reflection be happy thyſelf; and whilſt thou offereſt up thy pious lamentation, let *her well-ſpent life* teach thee what is the deſign of God, in giving breath to mortals. "If the *righteous*, who are dead, reproach the *ungodly*, who are living; and youth ſoon perfected, the many years of the *unrighteous*;" rather mourn for ſome who are *living*, than for thy *departed friend*. Be aſſured of this intereſting truth, contained in almoſt every page of the holy ſcriptures, that the *good are happy in death*. This is

as certain as the Being of God, and as true as that he delights in goodneſs.

Character of an excellent female ſervant.

After ſaying ſo much of people above our *rank*, let us not forget others who are equal, if not ſuperior to them in *virtue*. What an excellent young woman lately died in the 'Squire's family! She never forgot what ſhe was about: ſhe acted uniformly, as thoroughly ſenſible that ſhe lived in the preſence of her Maker, and that his eyes are open to all the works of men. I know not how to recommend to thee a better pattern than the good and much-lamented *Suſan*. We may allow the tribute of a tear to her virtues, which were highly deſerving of applauſe. The honours which relate to eternity, my daughter, are not to be meaſured by birth, title, or fortune: thoſe who are moſt acceptable in the ſight of God, will be rewarded with the brighteſt crown of immortal glory!

This young woman ſubmitted to her ſuperiors with reſpect, and diſcharged the duties of her ſtation with fidelity.

She ſaw that obedience is the principal cauſe of the happineſs of a family; and regularity and chearfulneſs the grand preſervatives of obedience. As ſhe was ſolicitous to promote the intereſt of her maſter and miſtreſs, they ſhewed the moſt proper attention to her welfare.

Her duty to them was performed with a good will; for ſhe conſidered this as the moſt acceptable offering ſhe could make to that great Lord and Maſter, *whoſe ſervice is perfect freedom*.

She was as careful not to defraud them of her time, as of any other property belonging to them.

On her death-bed ſhe confeſſed, that ſhe had been more than once tempted by the baſe arts, which in theſe days of diſſipation are often practiſed, particularly in *great* families, where neither maſter nor miſtreſs are rightly acquainted with their own affairs.

She often took notice to her fellow-ſervants, that as they were ſupplied with *food* and *raiment*, and all the comforts and neceſſaries of life, they ought to think themſelves bound in return, by every law, divine and human, not to commit the leaſt violation of juſtice to maſter or miſtreſs.

By length of ſervice, ſhe contracted a moſt ſincere reſpect for them, and their kindred; and no leſs affection for their children, partaking in all their joys and ſorrows.

With ſuch a good diſpoſition, thou mayſt eaſily imagine ſhe was a pattern to other ſervants, men as well as women: by her example they became decent in diſcourſe, and pure in manners, conſtant in public worſhip, regular in receiving the ſacrament and in family prayer.

She was charitable, even to the giving of alms—at the ſame time ſo prudent, that by her wages, and the particular kindneſs of her miſtreſs, ſhe ſaved four ſcore pounds, which ſhe bequeathed to her brother, whoſe wife lately died, and has left him with ſeven children.

In a word, *Suſan* gave the ſtrongeſt proofs, in the days of her health, as well as in her ſickneſs, of a ſteady confidence in the mercies of God, through the interceſſion of the great Redeemer of mankind.

During her illneſs, her miſtreſs was aſſiduous in performing every good office which could contribute to her recovery; and when ſhe died, the whole family was in tears. As a mark of their affectionate reſpect for her memory, they all attended her funeral, and ſtrewed her duſt with duſt, declaring their ſteady hopes in a joyful reſurrection; and that they ſhould meet her again, when their mortal bodies ſhould, like hers, put on *incorruption*.

Such a ſervant, *Mary*, deſerved honour, and her miſtreſs ordered a ſtone to be ſet at the head of her grave, inſcribed with theſe words:

STAY TRAVELLER!

STAY, AND OFFER

A SILENT TEAR TO MERIT.

Here lie the remains of Suſanna,
aged thirty:
Who being wiſe, knew when ſhe was well, and ſerved
the ſame Maſter and Miſtreſs
during Fifteen years,
'till her death.

Convinced that it was her glory to be a true Chriſtian,
ſhe became worthy of truſt as a good Servant.

Being honeſt and chaſte,
ſoon acquainted with whatever ſhe undertook, and diligent in the
execution of it,
ſhe paſſed her days with the ſatisfaction
which conſtantly attends a
faithful diſcharge of
duty.

Senſible that ſhe depended on ſervitude for bread,
ſhe learnt how to value That condition,
whilſt her gratitude and chearfulneſs rendered
her ſervice acceptable.

Piety and contentment combined to befriend her cauſe:
And as in life her conduct was truly worthy
of applauſe,
her death was juſtly lamented.

READER,

Whatever thy condition be on earth, let thy example,
like her's,
prove a benefit to the world;
and if thou aſpireſt to be happy,
learn to be good.

M. I have often heard that *Suſan* was much diſtinguiſhed for her virtues: I will endeavour to *deſerve* as fair a report; but I humbly think it had better not be proclaimed to the world.

You have been ſo obliging, my Father, and ſo indulgent to me, I cannot aſk more of you on this important ſubject.

T. There needs no more: Remember what I have told thee, and profit by it.

M. But pray, what opinion have you of the ſins and infirmities of *women*, compared to thoſe of *men?*

General obſervations on the female world.

T. I cannot ſay I have ſettled this point, or think it material. Whether women are betrayed into the vanities and follies they are uſually guilty of, moſt by following examples in faſhionable purſuits, or by gratifying their own perverſe inclinations, is of no great ſignification; ſince it is perverſe in man or woman *to follow a multitude to do evil.* I have often obſerved, things founded in reaſon, ſupported by religion, and conſented to by the common voice of the wiſeſt of mankind, are notwithſtanding ſlighted, as it were on account of their being *old*, and well known to our forefathers two thouſand years ago: but whether this be moſt verified in the lives of *women* or *men*, is a queſtion I do not undertake to determine.

Perhaps women are governed more by *fancy* than men uſually are; and moſt apt to grow fond of *gay* objects; theſe may contribute moſt to *their pleaſure*, but are not therefore the beſt calculated for their *happineſs*. The pleaſures of the imagination, like the ſhades of objects, vary according to the light in which they are viewed. If nothing can make us truly happy, which doth not laſt as long as we ſhall laſt, we muſt be *virtuous* to be *happy*.

Thou knoweſt that the grand object of my endeavours is to improve thy underſtanding, correct thy heart, and provide for thy everlaſting happineſs!

M. I know, my dear Father, your affection and uprightneſs, and wiſh your power was equal to your intentions of doing good, not to me only, but to mankind in general.

Concluſion of reflections on life and death.

I rejoice moſt ſincerely, as I ought, in *their* happineſs who are departed in the fear of God: but it ſeems to be a ſubject of *ſorrow*, that the apparent ſhortneſs and great uncertainty of life have ſo little effect on the behaviour of the generality of the world, that they ſeem to ſhut their eyes againſt the cleareſt and the ſtrongeſt light, inſomuch that neither the *infinite goodneſs* of God, which is every day apparent in his providence; nor the ſacrifice made for ſin by the *death of Chriſt*; nor the aſſurance of a righteous judgment to come, will engage them to conſider *their latter end!*

T. There is too much reaſon for thy obſervation: and it would indeed be amazing if we did not diſcover, by daily proof, how much oftener we ſuffer our *paſſions* to rule over us, than ſubmit to the government of *reaſon.*

If we examine the various ſtages of the life of man, from *crying infancy* to *decrepit dotage*, and the exquiſite mechaniſm of his frame, we muſt ſtand aſtoniſhed at the ſkill of the *great Artiſt*, and wonder how an object ſo compoſed, ſhould, in any perſon whatever, ſubſiſt for *three* or *fourſcore years!* Yet this is the ſmalleſt part of the wonder:—Behold his *mind*, how it encompaſſes the globe! How, by the force of ſkill and induſtry, and undaunted reſolution, he ventures to explore new regions, and to ſeek for ſeas and lands unknown. But moſt of all, we muſt *admire* and *adore* the great Author of all, who promiſes ſuch new ſcenes of wonders in *immortal joys*, that even the change from life to death, ſhall be the entrance to eternal bliſs, or life immortal which ſhall know no end!

As to the *unhappy diſorders of human nature* which thou complaineſt of, let it be thy part to conſider things *as they are*, the *good* as well as the *evil*; and to recommend them to the divine mercy, that under the influence of the grace of God, we may all ſtudy how to improve the good, and alleviate the evil, according to our ability, and the opportunity afforded us.

Thou haſt been told, 'that the race is not to the *ſwift*, nor the battle to the *ſtrong*, nor riches to the men of *underſtanding*;

ing; but that time and chance happen to them all.'—Experience proves, that notwithſtanding ſuch endowments, which afford a well-grounded confidence, accidents often intervene, which deprive us of ſucceſs. This is the ſenſe of the words; for what is *time* or *accident*, but the providence of God, which often interpoſes beyond our conception how it happens, to ſhew us, that He is the only Lord and Sovereign of the world?

As to thyſelf, my daughter, let the prize of immortality be ever preſent to thy thoughts!—The *hope of true and everlaſting happineſs* is an object which never *tires*. This conſideration, duly attended to, will prevent thy doing evil, and engage thee to do good.—If thy life and manners are formed upon this *hope* and *expectation*, it is next to impoſſible things ſhould go wrong with thee.

We ſhall *all* exiſt, through *all* eternity, and therefore the joys which relate to an eternal ſtate, can alone be adequate to our happineſs! Thou knoweſt that we call our preſent ſtate, our *life*, and *death* the *end* of life; but it is obvious that theſe expreſſions relate only to temporary things. In the juſt view of our *exiſtence*, this part of it which we dignify by the name of *life*, is but as the glimmerings of light, the dawning of the day, compared to the ſun in his meridian glory: It is as corn juſt ſhooting from the earth, compared to the fulneſs of the golden harveſt, the joyful rewards of the laborious huſbandman, when his wide vallies ſing with waving corn. This is indeed but a faint ſimilitude: for what is our preſent life? The returning year may blaſt our hopes, and famine plunge us into woe!

M. I have, with great concern, obſerved that moſt people talk of *ending this life*, as a dark and diſmal ſcene, and conſider reflections on it, as enemies to peace and joy.

T. This takes its riſe from various cauſes, but moſt from ignorance and want of faith. They who diſtinguiſh the innocent pleaſures, which religion allows, from the dark ſcenes of guilty joys, which make even horror tremble, ſoon learn the difference. They conſider that the ſame ſun which diſplays the beauty of objects, and gives them all the charms

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we moſt admire, often exhibits them as garlands of flowers withered and decayed by ſcorching heat or ſudden blaſts from heaven!—Yet, this is the thing which captivates the hearts of many, and leads them away in iron bondage—The day is near at hand, when nothing will appear more foreign to our *happineſs*, than the very objects by which we are ſo apt to be enthralled. Of this I have told thee of many inſtances of perſons in the *ſad gloom* of death, whilſt hopes in heaven's high joys have tranſported the hearts of others, and filled their ſouls with comfort. With a leſs degree of attention to ſuch intereſting ſcenes, daily experience proves how very different our thoughts are of the ſame object, when *preſent* or when *abſent*. From hence thou mayſt learn the vaſt importance of praying not to be led, or ſuffered to fall, into temptation: and that religion and virtue conſiſts in avoiding the occaſion of ſin, as well as the not falling into the ſin itſelf.

Time is now giving thee, and myſelf, leſſons how to *live*; and how to *die!* If we examine what hath been ſaid upon the immortality of the ſoul, by the *heathen philoſophers*, who were bright ſtars in their days of darkneſs: if we contemplate the glorious deeds of the Almighty, as deſcribed by *Moſes*; or view the brighter lights of immortality diſplayed by *Solomon:* and laſtly, if we will hear the voice of the Son of the living God, in every page of the New Teſtament, it muſt follow, that no one can give ſo high a proof of the ſuperiority of his underſtanding, as by proper reflections on death, and a juſt eſtimate of it.

When, like rational beings and believers in Chriſt, we think on the *millions* who are gone before us, and the *millions* who muſt follow, our minds expand themſelves; we refer our cauſe to heaven; and wait the *great teacher Death*, to ſatisfy all our 'pleaſing hopes, our fond deſires, our longings after immortality!' Thou perceiveſt that the *general* conſideration of death, ſhews the folly of *immoderate grief*, as well as *exceſſive joy*, for *any thing* relating to this world; and that it proves the *madneſs* of the daring ſinner, who mocks at the fear of God!—Thou knoweſt that his *laſt day* draws near, when he

he will ſtand trembling with terror before his *tremendous Judge!*——The approaching day of the *good* is alſo coming on in the ſame pace: and O my daughter, *forget not* that this will be to them a day of *triumph*, beyond the power of language to deſcribe! "The ſorrows of the poor and the deſpiſed will then fly away like the ſhades of night at the approach of the ſun!"—That ſuch triumphant joy may be thine, ſhall be my conſtant prayer!

END of PART I.

PART II.

THE HAPPY OECONOMY OF HUMBLE LIFE,

COMPARED WITH

FALSE SPLENDOR and the VANITY of RICHES.

PART II.

PART II.

CONVERSATION I.

In a Morning's Walk.

T. WHAT a glorious day it promiſes! The clouds are gently diſperſing; the dew-drops will ſoon yield to the ſun's brighter rays.—Where, *Mary*, ſhall we find ſuch cheap and ſhining jewels adorning a lady's boſom?

M. It is too early to ſee them diſtinctly.

T. Much earlier have I attended the field, wiſhing for day, that I might ſee the ſhepherd un-pen his fold, and give freedom and pleaſure to his ſheep.

M. I ſhould not like the life of a ſhepherd.

T. Why not? if he is an honeſt man: if he is content; if he envieth no man's happineſs, and knows but little of the bad world, do you not think he has joy, in ſeeing how kind Nature provides for the lamb, and the ewe that ſuckles it? And what ſhall we ſay of *their* lives who follow the plough, or thraſh the corn? Go higher up, and ſee how it fares with ſuperior ſtations: whatever the occupation be, the great diſtinction of men, is *virtue* and *vice*. This may be ſaid of every child of *Adam*: his youth is ſhort, and verges to age; his pleaſures ſhort, for pain waits at his heels; his wiſdom ſhort, for folly and paſſion will ever interpoſe at intervals, and cloud his judgment, or obſtruct his reſolutions. His life is ſhort, for he hardly learns how he ought to live, before he dies. His virtue too—

M. Not ſhort I hope!

T. It cannot be long in a ſhort life; and at the beſt it is far ſhort of the meaſure which the ſoul longs for. But it ſeems you are not in love with any ſhepherd: antient ſtory makes

many an enamoured ſhepherdeſs. You have heard much talk of virtuous ſhepherds! How little tempted they can be to evil! How calmly they tend their flocks, and count them over together with the hours, as the ſun riſes, and again leaves the earth. The ſhepherd has his domeſtic comforts too: if he paſſes on from day to day in the ſame beaten round, he doth not complain!

M. But what can the thoughts of a ſhepherd be, who ſees ſo little variety?

T. So little variety!—Nature furniſhes very diſtinguiſhed changes from hour to hour! He thinks of hunger and refreſhment: how ſweet his water-bottle is; and how beſt he ſhall protect himſelf from the lowering ſky, and threatening thunder-ſtorm. Or when the ſun rages with burning heat, what pleaſures yield the hawthorn-buſh, in kindly ſhade, and ſweet-ſmelling bloſſoms! He thinks of *ſhearing-time*, and forgets not when it is *Chriſtmas*, or *May-day*.

M. Do you believe ſhepherds think much of *God?*

T. They ſee the Almighty in his works, more than the prince ſurrounded by a crowd of ſhining flatterers. And if their hearts are free from guile, (and who ſhould *they* deceive?) they may rejoice from day to day, to life's lateſt hour, in hopes to find at laſt, the joys of heaven! The leſs they are in the ſociety of *men*, and only behold their ſheep, the leſs they will feel the pangs of ingratitude. Love's darts may loſe their points, or wound the leſs; and folly and treachery may be concealed from them.

M. So far they may be happy. But I ſuppoſe ſome *evil ſpirit* watches our paths in every beat of life, oppoſing the good inclinations of the heart.

T. If it were not ſo, ſhepherds would be as happy as poets have deſcribed them, in a ſtate of innocence. Do you not think that he who is moſt free from the temptations of the world, is generally the leaſt wicked? I was acquainted with ſhepherds, in my earlieſt days. You know that *my* father died, by a fall from his horſe, whilſt I was yet an infant; but my mother, whoſe tenderneſs for me was as great, as that which you experienced from your mother, gave me as good an education as a poor widow could afford. I could read, and write, and think,

think, and pray; and from nature, and the ſight of her affliction, I learnt to weep: when I beheld diſtreſs which I could not relieve, my heart ſwelled big with ſorrow. She lived in a ſmall hamlet near a *down:* here I uſed to walk, and give the lonely ſhepherd little books of pious meditations: here I contemplated the feeding of the *harmleſs* ſheep, and the care beſtowed upon them. I remembered that our Saviour did not diſdain to compare himſelf to a ſhepherd watching his flock. This reminded me of that Providence which ruleth over all things. The ſmooth green turf, and hillock; the ſteep riſing hill, and the dale full of ſtones, which ſeemed in courſe of ages to have grown upon the hill and tumbled down; the ſolemn wood which bordered the ſheep-walk, were all objects which ſtruck my fancy, whilſt they excited in my breaſt thoughts of piety, and humanity. My pleaſure, indeed, was mixed with a kind of melancholy, with which my mind was tinctured in thoſe early days.

M. I have heard the 'ſquire's daughter ſay, that *error* is the hateful child of melancholy. *I* am not hateful to *you*, my father; why ſhould you be melancholy? Had you done any thing very wrong, and therefore thought Heaven frowned upon you?

T. Much have I to lament in every untoward thought, or word, or deed: but this diſpoſition depends upon the temper and the ſtate of the blood, as well as a conſciouſneſs of guilt. We ſhould indeed hope that Heaven will ſmile upon us, ſo long as we *ſtrive* to be virtuous.

M. I think, in general, that you have corrected the natural bent of your temper; and are *chearful*, though ſeldom merry.

T. You are in the right. Are not theſe dew-drops fine, now that the ſun begins to ſhine upon them? And yet methinks they reſemble *tears*.

M. The fields appear to *me* as if they were ſtrewed with diamonds. Why ſhould you entertain a lively and a mournful thought together?

T. So it ſometimes happens: for nothing is ſo quick as thought. But to ſay the truth, my dear *Mary*, my heart is heavy. I have been thinking of our approaching ſeparation.

M. Let

M. Let us not think of it before the time. You have often told me, "That ſufficient for the day are the evils thereof."

T. True: but "Out of the fulneſs of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh."

M. Do you obſerve, my father, how yon lark mounts aloft, with joyful wings, ſwelling her throat as if ſhe meant to cheer the ſun?

T. She ſeems to teach us to exalt our thoughts to heaven, and praiſe our Creator for all the benefits which we receive. You are not more perfect of your kind, than that lark of her's; and if you conſider, how God is honoured in *all* his works, you will not wonder how the Royal Pſalmiſt ſhould conclude his devotion by ſaying, "Let every thing that hath breath, praiſe the Lord!" conſequently this lark. You ſee in her, how far the force of inſtinct goes, without any other principle of action. What ſentiments ought *you* to entertain, who are endowed with ſo noble a faculty as *reaſon*; *you* who are formed by nature, for the *rational worſhip of God*, and taught to glorify him even by reflecting on the inſtinct of that lark?

M. I am ſenſible of the happineſs I enjoy, and of all the bleſſings beſtowed upon me, by Him who is ſo full of goodneſs, whoſe works are ſo vaſtly great, ſo amazingly wonderful.

T. It is not for mortals to challenge the bleſſings which they enjoy, but to triumph in the thought, that the great Father of men is ſo tender to his children!—You and I, *Mary*, have had much ſerious diſcourſe during the winter: the ſeaſon now invites us to riſe with the day, to enjoy the ſweet air, and enlivening warmth of the ſun. Early hours prolong life, and render it joyful; and for the ſame reaſon that we gain ſo much time for our labour, we have more leiſure for our amuſement.

M. This happily anſwers both ends.

T. Virtue ever finds an immediate reward, as well as a pleaſure in proſpect.

M. I always thought it more joyful to go early to bed, and riſe with the ſun, than ſleep after it is riſen, unleſs I have been much fatigued, and then I reſt, faſt-locked in ſleep, as ſtrongly bound as any tired traveller. Sleep ſeems to be no

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leſs a comforter in grief; but, alas! my father, when I am ſorrowful, it forſakes me. I do remember well, when my dear brother died, my grief frightened ſleep away, and with difficulty I found relief in drowſy forgetfulneſs.

T. You have your ſorrows then.

M. Indeed I have! Some ancient people ſay, their chief deſire is ſleep; and that they think themſelves more happy in their cottage, than if they lay upon a kingly couch, deprived of this balmy comforter.

T. 'Tis not the coſtly canopy, nor all the pomp of ſtate, can bribe or flatter *ſleep* to viſit the eyelids of the *great:* they often watch, oppreſt with anxious wiſhes to cloſe their eyes, when the poor cottager feels no pain nor ſorrow! Sleep comes in gentle ſmiles to him, as if it meant to ſooth his cares, and give him earneſt of eternal reſt! Sleep is the image of death; and in the ſleep of death, *he* hopes to be received into happineſs, even in the boſom of his God!

M. Bleſſed is ſuch a cottager!

T. This is the ſtate of human kind, and this the happy power of virtue to raiſe the condition of the lowly. Wiſer folks than you or I, are generally inclined to overlook the *good* part of their ſituation: the bad we all feel. The ſleepleſs monarch vexed to the ſoul, and ſtarting with apprehenſions of ills to come; or the good clown, whoſe brain is undiſturbed by horrid images of fleeting fancies, or wild ambition; or dread of puniſhment hereafter: which of the two conditions do you think the moſt deſireable?

M. The queſtion is eaſily anſwered. I hope to have no ſuch conſciouſneſs of guilt to ſtartle me, in my ſleeping or my waking hours. I truſt in the mercy of God, that he will enable me to reſiſt all evil, that my ſleep may adminiſter to my ſtrength and labour, and the happineſs which attends an honeſt mind. I have often thought, that my prayers early in the morning, were the moſt grateful to God, becauſe I performed the duties of my life beſt, and with the leaſt interruption.

T. This is no bad reaſon; but who can go into the world, at any hour, with confidence or ſatisfaction, unleſs they firſt pray for *His* countenance and protection, who made and governs

verns it? Thoſe who by ſleeping neglect their duty to themſelves, or their neighbour, how can *they* be acceptable to God, who is the common friend to all? I wonder why the rich, who conſult their *pleaſure* ſo much, do not diſcover, that the more they ſleep, beyond what nature requires, the leſs time they have to enjoy their wealth. *Sleeping*, like *eating*, is only a preparative for *living*.

M. True: but they ſleep becauſe they are rich!

T. Or, if you pleaſe, they ſleep in the morning, becauſe they ſpend a great part of the night in *diverſion*; and other people provide for them the neceſſaries, conveniencies, and ornaments of life, requiring only to be paid for them.

M. Are not riches for this reaſon much to be deſired?

T. Not if the uſe of them is carried no further: when they are the cauſe of any falſe indulgence, they are an evil. How many ſwallow a whole bottle of wine, when a ſingle glaſs would do much better: or if perchance they never taſted this expenſive liquor, they would riſe earlier, and enjoy more health. If they indulge in any pleaſure, which reaſon and religion do not warrant, nor experience prove to be productive of good, their wealth becomes miſchievous. Thoſe who know not how to employ their time, may as well remain in bed, till they ſicken for want of *freſh air*, as millions of rich people do, without thinking of the cauſe. You would not believe me were I to tell you, that I have been ſent with a meſſage to a lady *at noon*, and been told her *ladyſhip* was not riſen!

M. How can they ſleep ſo long? Have fine ladies nothing to do?

T. Some *few* of them do nothing,—*of any ſignificance.* You remember the account I gave you of one that died: except her propenſity to amuſement, which hindered the progreſs of her virtues, O *ſhe* was amiable indeed! As to ſleep, all that is above what nature requires, is drowſineſs and ſtupidity: it doth not deſerve the name of *ſleep*, more than over-eating can be called *refreſhment*. The truth is, the rich are apt to *ſurfeit* themſelves with what *they* call *pleaſure*. There is no condition without its proper duties and employment; but whether rich or poor, thoſe who do not employ their time profitably,

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when they are riſen, may, I ſay, as well remain with their ſenſes locked up. Thoſe who continue in their beds, in the *ſummer* ſeaſon, after the ſun is riſen, exhauſt themſelves by over-heat; and thoſe who do not riſe before broad-day, in the *winter*, have but ſhort mornings. I have often heard my maſter ſay, it was by riſing early, and not playing at cards, nor ſitting long at table, that he could do more buſineſs than ſome ſcores of his acquaintance, who were otherwiſe much abler than himſelf.

M. It can be nothing but ignorance or idleneſs which keeps people in their beds, beyond the time which nature requires.

T. Falſe indulgencies are, indeed, but another name for *idleneſs*. If I remember right, we once talked about the miſuſe of time (*a*), as one of the moſt fatal evils incident to human life. Among ſervants, there cannot be a ſtronger proof of their worthleſſneſs, than ſleeping long; yet, I always obſerved, that this depended on the example of the maſter or miſtreſs.

M. I thank God my health keeps pace with regular reſt: I am not well when I ſit up late at night, or ſleep long in the morning: I feel myſelf ſtrengthened by labour, and my labour again adminiſters to my health. You know that I eat light ſuppers, and therefore am ſeldom diſturbed by any uneaſy dream. My heart is at eaſe; my ſpirits are free; and the more *uſefully* I am employed, the more ſatisfaction I feel.

T. You will continue to find it ſo: thoſe who are *buſy in doing nothing*, you may be ſure want virtue or ſenſe. Induſtry itſelf loſes its name, when it ceaſes to be profitable. In regard to *ſleep*, my maſter uſed to remark, that a little, being ſound, nouriſhes; and a great deal tends to ſickneſs and decay.—When are you to go, *Mary?*—I have much to ſay to you, before we part. The thought of being ſeparated from you, would not ſuffer me to ſleep laſt night! The parting of ſuch friends as you and I, reſembles death. In my youth, I was often divided from thoſe I loved; but never without ſome heart-bleeding pang: now that I am old, I have the ſame ſenſibility. Yet we muſt prepare for that land, where all things here below are ſaid to be forgotten. If

(*a*) Part I. p. 184.

it be really ſo, there will be ſomething in its place of a more exalted kind.

M. I believe there will. If *you* feel pain in the thought of our parting, how great ſhould *mine* be, who ſtand ſo much in need of your advice and aſſiſtance.

T. It will be happy, *Mary*, if a ſeparation does not alienate our mutual affections: for this often happens among people of our condition.

M. Our condition! Why, have not *we* affections, as ſtrong and as good, as the greateſt of mankind? God forbid that I ſhould forget my father, and my friend! let me rather forget my bread and vital air! But do you think that the trueſt friends never meet in a ſtate after death?

T. The opinion that there is ſuch a meeting, is a tender conceit of lovers and friends; but I cannot ſay that I know of any authority for it, or have indulged many thoughts about it: the mind is ſoon bewildered, when we compare *heaven* to *earth*. I have loved ſome of my friends, even to be willing to die for them; yet I have much higher notions of the happineſs of the bleſſed, than of the higheſt friendſhip: and alas! ſo little of this falls to the lot of mortals, heaven would be thinly peopled, if none were admitted there, but thoſe who have met with no diſappointment in their friendſhips. I have ſeen friends who ſeemed to wear but one heart; and yet, one falſe conceit, or vile ſuggeſtion of ſome pampered flatterer, hath untyed the ſacred knot, and quite diſſolved the union.

M. I am ſorry for it, my father; but ſurely thoſe who are beſt qualified for true friendſhip, are likewiſe the beſt qualified for heaven's joys.

T. We will talk of this hereafter. When I think of bliſs to come, *Mary*, whether I am fit for friendſhip or not, I tremble with a conſciouſneſs how ill I deſerve the joys of heaven, whatever theſe may conſiſt in. Do you, my child, keep *your* mind in peace, and your hope will diſpel all fear. Cheriſh an even, pleaſant temper, let the world go as it may: this is the beſt, for preſerving your ſincerity in your commerce with the world. Reflect on what is *right* or *wrong*; and torment not your heart about things out of your power: —You may be aſſured, that we owe our happineſs more

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to the turn of our thoughts, or, in other words, to our *contentment*, than to our fortunes. To ſome people, *every thing* is eaſy and agreeable; to others *nothing* is ſo.

M. I have, indeed, often obſerved this difference. You have poſſeſſed my mind ſo thoroughly with a ſenſe of *religion*, that whatever obligations I may owe to my temper, I feel, in my own breaſt, that my truſt in God is the true ſupport of my happineſs: in this do all my hopes and wiſhes center! In Him alone do I find peace; and in his favour is joy everlaſting!

T. Do you think you ſhall carry this opinion into practice, if temptations ſhould aſſault you?

M. I hope I ſhall—I do ſtedfaſtly intend to try.

T. And may the God of mercy aſſiſt you with his grace! You talk like a reaſonable creature, who cannot, for the very cauſe that he is reaſonable, enjoy any ſolid comfort, but from *thinking well*, and *acting right*, in the ſight of that God, who is the pillar on which reaſon ſtands, and the fountain from which all happineſs flows. Men who are not drunk with *pleaſure*, nor intoxicated with cares, recollect that their *end* is approaching faſt, when they ſhall be accepted or rejected by Him, who gave them life, and made the maccountable for the uſe of it.

M. This is a fearful, yet a pleaſing thought; ſo true, and ſo eaſy to underſtand, one would think it impoſſible not to be religious.

T. It ſeems to be as *natural*, as it is *reaſonable*, to be ſo. God hath framed us in ſuch a manner, that our natural deſire of happineſs, and the happineſs which our religion promiſes, accord with each other, and give a ſanction to our hopes.

M. But yet, the beſt are often unreaſonable.

T. And what is worſe, many learn the *art* of ſelf-deluſion: they try if they can make themſelves believe That to be right, which agrees with their fancy and opinion, which they call their reaſon. But as ſoon as theſe become their guides, they are bewildered, and find no reſting-place: they wander through all the fields of thought, and come at laſt to religion.

M. What would you anſwer, if any one ſhould aſk you what *reaſon* is?

T. I ſhould anſwer: That juſt and good principle within us, which oppoſes the paſſions when they are unruly: That which favours and encourages truth: That which corrects prejudices, and tells us how to bear evil: That which teaches what real good is, and how to enjoy it.—To act reaſonably, being inſtructed as you are, in the *chriſtian faith*, you muſt act like a *chriſtian*. This determines the point, about which ſome pretended wiſe men puzzle themſelves. Reaſon differs in men, as the ſame kind of tree, when one is pruned and dreſſed, ſo as to bring forth rich fruit; and the other left to grow wild. No one can be ſo true a friend to reaſon as the chriſtian, becauſe his religion only is true and *reaſonable*. The *myſterious* part of it, is indeed *above* reaſon, but not *contrary* to it: all other religions, that I have heard of, abound in abſurdities and contradictions.—I uſed to read ſome of my maſter's books, and hear him talk of what he had remarked in his travels, of *Paganiſm*, *Mahometaniſm*, the cuſtoms of various nations, and the deluſions of a great part of the world, which rendered people blind to reaſon. *You* need not do more than conſider what it is to be a *Chriſtian*, and to have a rational faith. This is the great end of reaſon; this the point on which *you* ſhould always fix your eyes; remembering that it is a duty to improve reaſon by *inſtruction*, for inſtruction makes religion, what in familiar language, we call, *natural* to us.

M. Though religion is of ſuch vaſt concernment, if I had not received any inſtruction, how could I have known what it meant?

T. Very true: can thoſe, whoſe parents or maſters do not ſhew them the paths of righteouſneſs, find them out? Religion is a rock on which all human happineſs is built: it is the greateſt, the moſt noble, the moſt delightful object the eye can behold; but it muſt be ſhewn to us in our early days, that we may ſee it clearly, and not turn our eyes from it: the common race of mortals can diſcern it only by its fruits. Earneſt deſires to pleaſe God, by ſerving him according to his will, cannot fail of obtaining of Him, who is the

great giver of all *good* things, ſuch happineſs in this world, as is fit for us; and the bleſſed ſtate above, when we are admitted into the joys of our Lord. If it is natural to wiſh to be *happy*, it muſt be alſo natural to ſeek for happineſs; and after all our ſearches, where are we to find it but in *Religion!*—How do you go on in the habit of prayer?

M. You often aſk me about my prayers, as if you was afraid I ſhould neglect them.

T. I aſk for a very good reaſon: it is to learn what progreſs you have made in that *willingneſs* of mind to worſhip God, which I have ſo frequently mentioned.

M. Alas! my father, I wiſh I could ſay that I am *ſo willing*, and *ſo attentive*, as to be *entirely* ſatisfied with myſelf.

T. Juſt now you ſaid that nothing diſturbed you.

M. I did not then recollect all that paſſes in my heart.

T. I ſhould have wondered if you had: we learn humility from a conſciouſneſs of the imperfection of our nature: and are the more anxious for good, whilſt we dread the evil. There is nothing which tends more directly to *good*, than the true worſhip of God; or to *evil*, than the *neglect* of it: therefore I enquire in relation to your *prayers*.

M. I have the pleaſure to tell you, that I *ſtrive* to pray with equal conſtancy and attention, and think I grow the better for it every day; but I fear I *never* ſhall be perfect!

T. My dear *Mary*, where is the child of *Adam*, whom nothing diſturbs? And where is *perfection* to be found on this ſide the grave? You are not to imagine, that *man* can render to *God* ſuch holineſs, as can poſſibly be acceptable to him, upon the foundation of *perfection*; but if you contemplate the mediation of *Chriſt*, who died for you, new hopes will daily ſpring up in your breaſt, and your *imperfection* will at length be ſwallowed up in divine mercy! Our holy religion has provided for the *imperfections* of human nature: it requires a ſpiritual, pure, and holy worſhip, and the ſtricteſt rules of honeſty in our dealings; but whilſt it ſearcheth the heart and reins, and requireth truth in the inward parts, it is fraught with all the tenderneſs and compaſſion, that can be conceived of the pureſt love, and moſt exalted friendſhip.

M. This

M. This reflection is comfortable to the *heart*.

T. Yes: and to the *head* alſo. Religion exacteth an outward obedience and conformity to its holy laws, and reſtrains every ſenſual thought of the mind, and every inordinate deſire of the heart. Theſe are the diſpoſitions required by our ſublime religion: and the promiſes of it are ſo agreeable to reaſon, and the love of God to man, that *being once informed as Chriſtians*, we ceaſe to be *rational*, when we lay Chriſtianity aſide, and act like infidels. So it appears to me; for what kind of *reaſon* hath an infidel, who hath no *hope*? It is the higheſt abſurdity for him to ſay he does not wiſh to be happy. He will allow, that the pleaſures of this life afford not happineſs equal to the longings of his ſoul: what world then is *he* to ſeek them in, or *how* is *he* to be happy? —You ſee that *happineſs* and *obedience*, upon Chriſtian principles, wait on and attend each other.

M. Your words are a balm to my bleeding heart!

T. The blood which diſtils from your heart, in this ſenſe, may prove its cure. You will always carry in mind, that the Almighty, not to be defeated in his gracious purpoſes towards us, has provided proper remedies for every want; and the ſincerity of our efforts to pleaſe him, conſtitutes the ſtate of trial in which we now are. Whatever elſe may offend him, you may be ſure that *ſincerity* is pleaſing. The great point is to be *ſincere*, for ſincerity will force us to exert our endeavours to pleaſe him.

M. Are there no other people but Chriſtians, ſincere?

T. I ſay, that *every Chriſtian* muſt be ſincere in heart, in the ſight of God: not to be ſincere is to be a hypocrite.

M. Some people ſeem to be ſincere, yet alter ſtrangely.

T. Sincerity muſt ſhew itſelf by obedience: it was upon the terms of obedience, that the pardon of God for the ſins of men, was brought down from heaven by *Jeſus Chriſt*, who ſealed *his* ſincerity with his blood!

M. O gracious Heaven!

T. And this merciful diſpenſation has put us under the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is this ſincerity of mind which ſo effectually helpeth our infirmities, as to prove our ſtay in proſperity, our ſupport in adverſity, and the ſweet companion

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of our *ſpiritual warfare.* Theſe expreſſions, *Mary*, however big with ſolid ſenſe, and ſound philoſophy, have no charms in the eyes of thoſe who *will* not ſee; nor any melody in the ears of thoſe who *will* not hear. But of this be aſſured from your dear father, and your friend, that if you attend to the good emotions of your own heart, according to the inſtruction which you have received in your religion, you will be led, through *Chriſt*, to God, who is the end of all our hopes! Thus, he who ſitteth on the right hand of God to make continual interceſſion for us, will *perfect your prayers*, and praiſes, before the throne of heaven; ſupply your wants, confirm your faith, ſtrengthen your virtue, and make your repentance available to the remiſſion of your ſins.

M. I am fully perſuaded of this great truth, and that if I am ſincere and perform the conditions on *my* part, I ſhall be received into a ſtate of everlaſting glory; which is as much to be preferred to all earthly greatneſs, as ſhort and uncertain pleaſure is to ſure and certain bliſs eternal: for I believe from my heart, that the Son of God, is at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, ſitting as my advocate, and interceding for *me* and the reſt of mankind: that he receives and offers up my prayers, and if I diſcharge my part with ſincerity of heart, he will obtain for me the remiſſion of my ſins, having made one oblation of himſelf upon the croſs, for the ſins of the world, the memorial of which is ever in the ſight of God!

T. Can you believe this, *Mary*, and ever neglect your daily conſtant worſhip of him? My good daughter, and my much loved child! I truſt in God, I ſhall always call you by theſe endearing names, whilſt that God ſhall give me breath to utter the ſentiments of my heart. I feel a joy on ſuch occaſions, which I have no words to deſcribe!—my tears muſt ſpeak it. Were fathers merely the inſtruments of their childrens birth, whether they ſpoke like angels, or ſounded their voice like brutes, the matter were not great: but when I think how much I may be the inſtrument of making you an angel, or leave you ignorant as the ox, or filthy as the ſwine; methinks I owe to heaven a debt, not payable but with my utmoſt care: that care, *you* now confeſs; and make me bleſſed in the deed! O gracious God, reward my conſtancy

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by my daughter's virtue! Let my loved child continue in thy favour, and time ſhall make her ſoul an offering fit for thee. This is the higheſt object of my wiſh. Let *her* be bleſſed, that through my zeal for thy honour, I alſo may behold the glories of thy throne, through the mediation of *that* great deliverer in whom we truſt!

M. —My dear father!——

T. Often have you ſeen my heart;—but never more uncovered.——Pious perſons, whoſe ſpirits are unchaſtiſed by reaſon, often degenerate into pious rants; whilſt thoſe who are diſinclined to piety, find no leiſure to attend to ſuch ſentiments with relation to their children. Talk to thoſe who are not inſtructed, they grow proud of their ignorance, and bewildered in their infidelity. Talk to them, I ſay, of the grace of God, and the operations of his *Holy Spirit*, influencing the mind of his faithful ſervants; they will ſmile, as if you was a ſimple girl, good in heart, but weak in underſtanding. But their *wiſdom* is fooliſhneſs, which God will confound. Let them, whilſt their hour laſts, comprehend that as the *ſpirit of man* which is in *him*, knoweth the *mind of man*, and his own perverſe inclinations; ſo by the aſſiſtance of the *Spirit of God*, man may ſurely be directed in the *ways of God*, and his righteouſneſs. Read the ſcriptures with attention (*a*), not going out

(*a*) The uſual method of initiating young perſons into reading the ſcriptures at large, taking ſcraps of the hiſtory, without confining them to the plain and inſtructive parts, ſuch as are adapted to their comprehenſion; or neglecting to call on them, to ſee if they underſtand ſo as to make an impreſſion on the mind, is, of every imaginable method, the worſt calculated for the end propoſed. As to a ſeries of the great hiſtorical events, the lower claſſes may begin by reading a little tract or abridgement of the holy writings: there is one well digeſted by the Rev. Mr. *Seilon*. For young perſons of ſuperior condition, the method propoſed in two little volumes, addreſſed to a young lady, entitled, "Letters on the Improvement of the Mind," ſeems to deſerve great attention. This book, printed for J. Walter, Charing-Croſs, is the production of a lady's pen, in which elegance and maſculine ſenſe are moſt happily blended. As ſhe ſhews great knowledge of the heart, ſhe is not leſs acquainted with the world: ſhe ſeems to have read the ſcriptures with attention; and her piety as a chriſtian, has taught her how to recommend the uſe of them in the moſt profitable manner.

out of your depth, nor perplexing your thoughts with paſſages you do not underſtand; but proceeding on this firm and ſolid ground, that ſuch leſſons as the meaneſt can comprehend, are ſufficient for *you*. In order to form a juſt notion of the great importance of theſe leſſons, and at the ſame time receive the deepeſt impreſſion, obſerve what evident marks they carry with them, of their divine original, from their great purity and ſimplicity: mark how admirably they are calculated in every relation, to ſupport the peace and harmony of the world, and make us all happy! The prince and people, the huſband, wife, and child, the maſter and the ſervant, have a certain and invariable rule to walk by, founded upon *everlaſting truth*. Human affections are variable, the paſſions unſteady, and depend on circumſtances; but a right ſenſe of duty, is fixed and ſolid as the earth we tread upon.

M. You mean, duty to God.

T. By duty, I mean a chriſtian principle, not to be departed from, though it ſhould coſt your life. Many of the firſt Chriſtians, and others in later ages, have laid down their lives for their principle; or in other words, for their religion: eſteeming their hopes of immortality beyond a thouſand lives, had ſo many been given them.

M. What part of the ſcriptures do you recommend moſt?

T. The fifth chapter of St. *Matthew*: read and conſider what admirable leſſons it teaches!—The more they oppoſe the corruption of your heart, the more highly you ought to eſteem them. And as to the love of God, reſulting from a habit of obedience to his laws; though St. *John*, who ſeems to have been the beloved diſciple, and moſt intimate friend of our Lord, has ſome paſſages which may not be eaſy for you to underſtand; yet, you will find enough in him, that you clearly comprehend, to exalt and enrapture your ſoul with the power of love to God, and benevolence to your fellow-creatures.

M. I am ſenſible that without kindneſs and compaſſion towards human kind, it is impoſſible to expreſs my love for God: for, "he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God, whom he hath not ſeen?"

T. True: what excellent leſſons are alſo delivered to us by St. *James*, in his epiſtle; wherein he tells us, that we deceive our own hearts, and our religion is vain, unleſs we bridle our tongues, and ſhew mercy. That to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow in their affliction, and to keep ourſelves unſpotted from the world, is the ſum and ſubſtance of religion:—That whether we be rich or poor, man is but a flower which fadeth away:—and therefore, every one, of high or low condition, ought to rejoice, ſeeing that we are all promiſed immortal happineſs. As to conteſts about *faith* and *good works*: can any thing be more injurious to the honour of God, than to imagine he intended they ſhould be ever ſeparated in our opinion? We have the clear authority of this Apoſtle, when he aſks, how *can* you ſhew your faith, but by your works? This explains all the difficulties which occur in St. *Paul*, who is often miſunderſtood by his unlettered or opinionated readers, who do not diſtinguiſh the faith of a *Jew*, and the faith of a *Chriſtian*. Thoſe who built their faith and expectations of happineſs after death, upon the *law of Moſes*, and the obſervance of his outward ceremonies, could not at the ſame time, expect the rewards of obedience to the purer, and more exalted precepts, delivered to us by the Son of God. As to the works of moral righteouſneſs, which we find ſo correſpondent with the dictates of conſcience, they are explained to us in ſo clear and perſuaſive a manner, by the great Deliverer of mankind and his followers, that to pretend to miſtake them, is adding ſin to ſin, provoking the Almighty to vengeance.

M. I often hear people talk, as if they meant to confound the diſtinction of right and wrong.

T. He that ſhutteth his eyes, and will not ſee, doth in effect devote himſelf to deſtruction. Practiſe what you comprehend: it will reſcue you out of all danger, and protect you againſt all the powers of darkneſs! For this there needs no endowment, beyond an honeſt mind, and a plain underſtanding. Conſider, O my daughter, how much better it is to die in virtuous poverty, as a believer in *Chriſt*, than to *live* in all the ſplendor that ever attended on *infidelity!* What can we compare to *virtue?* What can compenſate for the want of religion?

M. Moſt

M. Moſt people ſeem charmed with worldly greatneſs: I have often thought of the precarioufneſs of greatneſs, ſuppoſing we could command it, ſeeing that it can laſt no longer than we remain on earth: and I have lived long enough to ſee many rich people die.

T. How very ſhort and uncertain is life! How much ſhorter the pleaſures of it: and theſe depend on health, and the virtue of other people, as well as our own. Laſt year the 'ſquire's brother died, the year before, his uncle; perhaps *he* may die this year. And little do *you* know, what the *great*, who are not good chriſtians, ſuffer in their minds, eſpecially when they come to die. Our condition, in regard to our *fellow-creatures*, whom we muſt leave in ſo ſhort a time, is of little moment, provided our hearts reproach us not with reſpect to *God*, before whom we are all haſtening to appear, and to remain in bliſs or torment for ever! As far as the conſideration of *eternity* is more intereſting than *time!* As far as happineſs is preferable to miſery; ſo far is religion the moſt important concern of our lives.

M. Every body admits your doctrine, though few are in their right minds enough to act agreeably to it.

T. If this is ſo univerſally aſſented to in *opinion*, and ſo little regarded in *practice*, may one not be induced to think that many have really loſt their wits?

M. Their conduct is hard to be reconciled!

T. The perverſeneſs, which is the conſtant ſubject of our complaint, and with which the good contend ſo earneſtly, accounts for this difficulty. But obſerve, my daughter, whatever complaints we make of ourſelves, it is moſt obvious to common ſenſe, that if we ſincerely attend to the motions of our own hearts, with regard to what we are perſuaded is *good*, it is a reaſonable and juſt foundation for *hope* and *confidence* in the glorious promiſes of the goſpel, from which all comfort ſprings. If you indulge the pleaſure of thinking of the happineſs promiſed, you will find that it will afford courage and ſatisfaction. It is by this that death is ſtript of all his terrors! I have juſt told you, and we are all equally ſenſible, from the condition of human nature, that *abſolute perfection* is not to be expected on this ſide the grave; but mark me well,

my dear child; not to ſeek for a continual progreſs in improvement, is ceaſing to be a candidate for that *degree* of *religious ſincerity* and *practical piety* towards God, to which the glories of immortal bliſs are promiſed.

M. I hope that my endeavours to be *good*, which are beſt known to the Father of all ſpirits; and my dutiful behaviour to *you*, will make God my friend; and this I firmly truſt will give life to my hopes, and calm the fears which ſometimes hang about my heart, concerning my eternal ſtate.

T. Let no day nor night paſs unhallowed! Ever remember the great Lord of all, who hath commanded us not to be ſorrowful as men without hope, but to rejoice always. I know from ſad experience, how obſtinate and perverſe the heart often proves; but I alſo know, that the effects of virtue are comfort, peace, and joy, the joy that is delightful in the proſpect of eternity! By no means deceive yourſelf; *prayer* to God, for aſſiſtance and ſubmiſſion to his will, is as neceſſary to the ſpiritual, as *air* to the animal life; this is the touchſtone, whereon to try the heart, whether it be pure gold, or ſome baſe metal, which has only its *colour*. It is a melancholy truth, *Mary*, that moſt people prefer *trifling objects* of mere *fancy* or gain, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, to thoſe rules of conduct on which a happy eternity depends! Thus they loſe their *reliſh* for *ſpiritual objects*.

M. Alas! my father, if a *Jew* could ſay that his heart wept, or the tears ran from his eyes, becauſe men kept not the law of God; what ſhould a *Chriſtian* do? I have ſtored up the leſſons which you have ſo often given me, with ſuch affection, that I truſt I never ſhall forget them: they are engraven deeply on my heart: I hope to enjoy the good effects through my whole life, in the hour of death,—and in the day of judgment!

T. It is enough; my conſtant prayer ſhall be, that you *may* remember: but whilſt we are talking of the *end*, let us uſe the *means*. The plain and ſimple *means*, of *reading* and *prayer*, have ſeldom been practiſed, at any time of life, without great advantage. In the days of *youth*, this is of the higheſt importance; and when age comes on, it is the ſtrength of the ſoul, ſtanding on the verge of eternity! In worldly

concerns,

concerns we count it baſe to ſhew an *unwillingneſs* to pay our debts; and where our obligations run ſo high as the ſaving of life, and furniſhing the means of living, what can we do too much? we almoſt adore our friend and benefactor: we wiſh to die for him, to gratify our ſenſe of obligation.

M. True, my father: in virtuous minds I am perſuaded it is ſo.

T. Think then on the debt of gratitude which you owe to God, for your creation and redemption; for the breath you draw, and the ſupport and comfort you receive. And what return can you make, but repentance, praiſe, and thankſgiving? Communication with God, in the *ſenſe*, or *nonſenſe*, of viſionary pietiſts, as I have told you often, ſeems to imply ſomething ſuperior to the powers of mortals. Men are men, not angels; but they may read with ſuch attention to their ſubject, and pray with ſuch humility, that their prayers may reach the throne of God. This is true communication with God: and this is all that he requires. We who are duſt and aſhes, muſt not intrude ourſelves wantonly on the majeſty of the Almighty. If we obſerve his ſtatutes, and obey them with a contrite heart, we live *with* him: and this we may juſtly call *communication* with him.

M. The poor ſtill complain, as if the time required for the duties of religion, were beyond the meaſure which the drudgery of life will admit of.

T. Can *God* be ignorant of our temporal wants? Fantaſtical excuſes, are ſo many acts of ingratitude, and aggravations of guilt! God hath declared himſelf to be the Father of the poor, and will he diſtreſs his children?

M. If I pray conſtantly morning and night, will it not be ſufficient?

T. It will depend upon the experiment, whether it is or not. Thoſe who pray earneſtly, with a view to keep up a due ſenſe of their dependance on God, do for the ſame reaſon *read* alſo, and *hear* the *word of God*, with cloſe attention. People who *never pray*, if ſuch there are, it ſignifies but little, in regard to *their* devotion, whether they *read* or not. If *you* aſk, What is enough? I alſo aſk, What is too much, which is *reaſonable* to be done? Can all the efforts of the human

my dear child; not to ſeek for a continual progreſs in improvement, is ceaſing to be a candidate for that *degree* of *religious ſincerity* and *practical piety* towards God, to which the glories of immortal bliſs are promiſed.

M. I hope that my endeavours to be *good*, which are beſt known to the Father of all ſpirits; and my dutiful behaviour to *you*, will make God my friend; and this I firmly truſt will give life to my hopes, and calm the fears which ſometimes hang about my heart, concerning my eternal ſtate.

T. Let no day nor night paſs unhallowed! Ever remember the great Lord of all, who hath commanded us not to be ſorrowful as men without hope, but to rejoice always. I know from ſad experience, how obſtinate and perverſe the heart often proves; but I alſo know, that the effects of virtue are comfort, peace, and joy, the joy that is delightful in the proſpect of eternity! By no means deceive yourſelf; *prayer* to God, for aſſiſtance and ſubmiſſion to his will, is as neceſſary to the ſpiritual, as *air* to the animal life: this is the touchſtone, whereon to try the heart, whether it be pure gold, or ſome baſe metal, which has only its *colour*. It is a melancholy truth, *Mary*, that moſt people prefer *trifling objects* of mere *fancy* or gain, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, to thoſe rules of conduct on which a happy eternity depends! Thus they loſe their *reliſh* for *ſpiritual objects*.

M. Alas! my father, if a *Jew* could ſay that his heart wept, or the tears ran from his eyes, becauſe men kept not the law of God; what ſhould a *Chriſtian* do? I have ſtored up the leſſons which you have ſo often given me, with ſuch affection, that I truſt I never ſhall forget them: they are engraven deeply on my heart: I hope to enjoy the good effects through my whole life, in the hour of death,—and in the day of judgment!

T. It is enough; my conſtant prayer ſhall be, that you *may* remember: but whilſt we are talking of the *end*, let us uſe the *means*. The plain and ſimple *means*, of *reading* and *prayer*, have ſeldom been practiſed, at any time of life, without great advantage. In the days of *youth*, this is of the higheſt importance; and when age comes on, it is the ſtrength of the ſoul, ſtanding on the verge of eternity! In worldly

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human ſoul, over-pay our debt to God, or exceed the vaſt concerns of *eternity?* What worldly intereſt or inclination can come in competition with that which is to endure for ever? To believe in the immortality of the ſoul, and to act as if it were not immortal, is of all contradictions the greateſt, and of all the diſtempers of the mind, the moſt fatal. To entertain any apprehenſions that we can do *too much* to pleaſe God, is abſurd. It is ſaid, "Be not righteous *overmuch:* why ſhouldſt thou *deſtroy* thyſelf?" Why indeed? Such deſtruction can happen only from enthuſiaſtic devotion, not the *reaſonable* ſervice of God.—Our Saviour and his followers, who commanded us to *pray*, enjoined us alſo to *read* the ſcriptures. And is it not reaſonable to preſume, that when we read the word of God, wherein he requires the pure incenſe of our prayers, that we ſhall be the more induced to *pray?* He who knows the heart of man, cannot be ignorant of the *neceſſity* of prayer, as a means of keeping himſelf in *our thoughts*; without which, according to our notions of juſtice, he will not preſerve us in *his love*. It is no leſs evident, that the man who does *not* think of his Maker, can have no *religion*. The common-ſenſe of mankind teaches, that to acquire the knowledge or practice of any thing, we muſt think of it in a manner ſuitable to the object.

M. Do you conſider the preſent age more remiſs in religious concerns, than former times?

T. We are to look back to the purity of primitive Chriſtianity, for we can never come too near the *example* of our Bleſſed Lord. The *firſt Chriſtians* were in a ſtate of perſecution, which *they* converted into good, by making it ſerve as a monitor, to remind them of how little value this world is, compared to that which is to come. *We* are under no ſuch difficulties, and therefore ſtand in need of *ſome other admonition*; and the neceſſity of it increaſes, in proportion to the bad example which the lives of many profeſſed Chriſtians preſent to our eyes.

M. You conſider then, that *reading* the word of God is neceſſary to devotion.

T. This is more effectual to animate us in our warfare againſt the world, than any thing I can conceive; and we

ſtand

ſtand bound from our very birth, to fight againſt and ſubdue the world; and can any thing ſerve to keep us more ſteady and reſolute in the paths of virtue, than attention to the word of God? What is it which, in our youthful days, gives us thoſe impreſſions, that generally laſt through our whole lives? For this reaſon, I introduced ſeveral extracts of the ſacred writings in the *little book* which I gave you. When you have not time for more reading, this may be your daily repaſt; and two minutes entertainment, will cheer your ſpirit through the whole labour of the day; and in the watch of night, the remembrance will bring comfort to your ſoul. Try the experiment; if you find it not as I tell you, ſuppoſe the fault to be in yourſelf: it cannot be in the word of God. For heaven's ſake, let us be *conſiſtent!* Let us act reaſonably, upon the great principle of the immortality of the ſoul, and truſt in that revelation which we profeſs to believe; and not ſleep upon a precipice!—Did I ever charge you *to uſe the Book of Common-Prayer, at Church?*

M. I do not remember: but if I can ſay my prayers without a book, why ſhould I uſe one?

T. I never met with any perſon yet, who could repeat half the Liturgy without the aſſiſtance of a book: but I will tell you another obvious reaſon why you ſhould uſe a book. If you really uſe it, you cannot be looking at any thing elſe. Some extraordinary perſons can pray *without a book*; but, in general, it helps us to collect our thoughts, and fix them on the ſenſe of the words, whether they are to be repeated aloud, or in ſolemn ſilence, as the ſervice may require. Repetition helps recollection: our thoughts wander leaſt, when we repeat. The meekneſs and humility which are ſo amiable in themſelves, and work ſo powerfully to bring back a *wandering* ſpirit to a ſenſe of duty, are no leſs eſſential to aſſiſt our attention to our prayers.

M. I am frequently diſtreſt at church; for before I have half ſaid, *We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord*, the reverend gentleman is got half way into the next petition.

T. This is a fault ſome of the clergy fall into: I hope the day will come, when they may ſtand corrected, and ſupport their own dignity, as well as the intereſt of their congregation.

It is their office and obligation to endeavour to excite our devotion: if *they* are careleſs, *we* ſhall be ſo likewiſe. If too great a taſk is required of *them*, let it be *reformed*. If the aboliſhers of popery erred in uniting two ſervices, and this is found too laborious to be well performed, it is the buſineſs of the ruling powers to ſee every dangerous evil rectified. Is it not dangerous to throw in the way of the clergy, a temptation to hurry over their work, in a manner as little honourable to themſelves, as advantageous to their congregation? If we do not attend to the ſenſe of the words we utter, how can we be ſaid to pray? If one clergyman is truly devout in his office, and another throws *chaff* before the wind; ſhall we be ſatisfied with both? or complain of the injuſtice done to our ſouls? Our greateſt concern being our eternal welfare, we ſhould honour thoſe moſt, who contribute moſt to ſuch welfare. It is obvious to common ſenſe, and the feelings of every heart capable of feeling, that the want of ſolemnity and propriety of expreſſion, contributes largely in creating an indifference to the great buſineſs of devotion: and we ſee the effect, by neglecting the uſe of the Common-Prayer; and by looking about carleſsly, not kneeling, not making the reſponſes; in ſhort, forgetting what we are about. Conſider, my dear *Mary*, what preſumption it is to ſay, "To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein!" and at the ſame time, be ſo far from feeling the heart glow with heavenly fire, as really not to attend to the common meaning of the words. Or, what ſhall we ſay of him who repeats, "*Thou art the King of glory*, O Chriſt! Thou art the everlaſting Son of the Father!" without any emotion? Or by what name ſhall we call indifference to our religious worſhip, when we declare, "We believe that thou wilt come to be our judge!" Can *we believe this*, and not attend to ſo *awful* a declaration?

M. I am aſtoniſhed at the ſtupidity which I have been witneſs to. When we ſhould all anſwer, "*All the earth doth worſhip thee, the Father everlaſting!*" to ſee my neighbour's lips as much cloſed, as if he were dead, is horrible! And who can ſay, "When thou tookeſt upon thee to deliver man,

man, thou didſt not abhor the virgin's womb," without the deepeſt ſenſe of gratitude to the Saviour of mankind?

T. It is from the want of inſtruction, as well as a groſs neglect of the great truths of our religion, that we ſee ſo much lukewarmneſs and diſregard. Be the *cauſe* what it may, we feel the *effect*; and it is high time we ſhould mend: if we deſire that the mercies of God ſhould *lighten upon us*, in the ſame degree *as our truſt is in Him*, if we do not *truſt*, we do not in effect *deſire* mercy: and ſhall we receive it, whether we deſire it or not?—Can you form any notion of the perfections of God; and yet dare to treat him thus preſumptuouſly?

M. If the advantage of prayer conſiſts not in the *multiplicity* of the words, but in the ſenſe of them, we muſt have time to poſſeſs our ſpirits with a due ſenſe of what we utter.—How am I to ſupply the defects of public worſhip?

T. Do you mean other people's defects, or your own? We cannot make the world as we would have it; but we may ſupply, by our private devotion, whatever is to us unavoidably defective in our public worſhip.

M. What think you of thoſe, who *never* pray, except when they are at *church*?

T. The leſs you think of evils you cannot cure, the more eaſy will your heart be. How far thoſe that never pray at home, can be ſaid really to *pray* at church, is a queſtion I cannot reſolve. We are bound, by the laws of chriſtian charity, to believe the beſt we can of the ſinner, as well as the ſaint; and whilſt you are ſolicitous for others, take care not to be yourſelf a *caſt-away*.—Now that we are upon this ſubject, *Mary*, let me repeat my exhortation, that whenever you fall upon your knees before God, in *private*, where you can command your own time, if perchance your thoughts ſhould wander, as ſoon as you are conſcious of it, renew your petition; or, in other words, ſay your prayers over again: this will give you a habit of attention. Let your heart accompany your words, and you will find ſuch joy and pleaſure, as will abundantly repay you. Whether in youth, or age, your proſpect will be bright; you will look forward to futurity, with a degree of tranſport, and ſpeak of God in the higheſt

terms of praiſe and gratitude! We are all equally commanded, to make our wants known unto God, by ſupplication and prayer; and do you ſhew your gratitude by the expreſſion of your thanks (*a*). He knows your heart: it is your part, not to deceive yourſelf, by any falſe ſelf-love. Be true to your own ſoul, and you will ſhew your love to God. Keep his ſtatutes and walk before him with an upright heart, and your confidence in immortal happineſs, will ſweeten your cup, in ſpite of all the bitterneſs which perchance may be thrown into it.

(*a*) O Lord, I praiſe and worſhip thee, for all thy bountiful mercies to the ſons of men! Thou, gracious Father, ſendeſt rain and ſunſhine upon the earth, to preſerve our bodies, and fill our hearts with gladneſs. Angels and arch-angels, and all the hoſt of heaven, adore thy love to man! Thou, who didſt ſend thy Son to die for our ſins, and deliver our ſouls from the dominion of darkneſs, and unutterable woe, hath ſhewn us the path to the brightneſs of thy preſence, that we may partake of thy triumphant joys, in the regions of the bleſſed!—To Thee I devote my heart:—my ſong ſhall be of thy righteouſneſs and truth, and my tongue ſhall tell of thy mercy!—While life remains, thy goodneſs ſhall be my theme. I will contemplate thy works, and adore thy glory and power! O God eternal, hear my vow, and hold me in thy precious fear and love, for his ſake, who bled upon the croſs to redeem the world!

CONVERSATION II.

In the Morning.

T. THE glories of the morning diſpel the darkneſs, and ſeem to lighten up our minds to new praiſe and adoration. Ere long we ſhall ſee that day, which hath no night, where all is bright and full of joy! Let us think hourly of it, and ſtrive to ſecure ſo glorious an inheritance from the hand of God!——Pray, what ſucceſs had you in recommending to our neighbours, the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper?—

M. Succeſs, my father! What did you expect I ſhould be able to do? My friend *Betty Churchman* ſays, *ſhe* is convinced of her folly and negligence, and will *receive* the firſt time it is adminiſtered.—And I hope by her means we ſhall go on from one to another. It is probable her lover, *William Sweet*, will follow her example.—You know, *Betty* is young and handſome, and can do more than people who are old and ugly.

T. Why ſo?—

M. They being ſuppoſed to be good, only becauſe they muſt die ſoon.

T. A very pretty argument, truly. If their tenement is more decayed, more light is let in upon them, through the chinks made by time. They alſo have more experience of themſelves and the world: they ſee things more, as they are in their own nature, free from thoſe prejudices and paſſions, which are ſo apt to blind us in earlier days. Has youth ſuch advantages? Do you imagine, that I wiſh to live my days over again, with the conſciouſneſs I have of all the imperfections of my nature.

M. Indeed, I rejoice from the conſideration, how eaſily I might have been betrayed, had I not been bleſt with ſo able a monitor as you are.

T. Do they mean, that the young may live to *repent*, and therefore they *ſin?*

M. I believe they know not their own meaning, except it be, that they do not chuſe to take much thought about religion, having no pleaſure in it.

T. If this is their miſerable ſtate: if this is their condition, how much more deſirable are the grey locks of virtue! To have a crazy conſtitution, the effect of intemperance; to grow peeviſh with diſappointments; to loſe the honour, love, and eſteem of friends, and neither to be reconciled to this world, nor expect any good in the next, is a deplorable ſituation: but this comes of ſuch careleſſneſs and irreligion in youth, as your young acquaintance ſeem to plume themſelves upon, not of the virtue and religion which I recommend to you.

M. What indeed is life, but as it improves our virtue: and what is death to thoſe who are Virtue's friends? I have reminded my acquaintance, that they every day ſee *young* perſons die, whilſt *old* ones live: that with regard to the chriſtian duty of partaking of the Lord's ſupper, I was ſure they could not complain of want of opportunity.

T. The clergy are always ready to adminiſter the ſacrament, upon the proper occaſions: they invite; they lament the abſence of their pariſhioners; and thoſe divines who are moved by the true ſpirit of religion, give advice in private, as well as from the pulpit.

M. I remember your admonitions on this ſubject.—What can be the meaning of ſuch wonderful negligence? Do you think the clergy are ſufficiently aware of the impreſſions they give, on reading the exhortations in the communion-ſervice? They repreſent on one ſide, *how divine and comfortable a thing it is to receive worthily*; and on the other, *how dangerous to preſume to receive it unworthily*. Every one cannot be ſuppoſed equally good that receives; and no one I hope is guilty of the preſumption of purpoſely receiving *unworthily*, or of receiving it ſo, as the words expreſs, *to do nothing elſe than to increaſe their damnation*.

T. I have obſerved, that many of the clergy never read the exhortations: they ſeem to think this part of the ſervice more honoured in the breach, than in the obſervance

of

of it: ſome uſe the word *condemnation*, not *damnation*: others omit the firſt, and read the ſecond exhortation, which is equally ſtrong, but incomparably the moſt perſuaſive. Were they to extract from both, a moſt admirable addreſs might be penned; but experience proves, that *threatening* ſerves only to frighten people; and can be of no uſe to thoſe who have no heart to attend to the performance of this duty; but may do great diſſervice to ſuch as have hearts leſs corrupt. And what greater proof can we have of the impropriety of ſuch expreſſions, than the ſad effects ſeen in the neglect of the ſacrament? It is likewiſe to be preſumed, that ſome read the exhortation addreſſed by the miniſter, at the adminiſtration of the ſacrament, to the communicants; this again mentions the danger of receiving *unworthily*, even to be guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt; and that if they do not conſider the Lord's body, they eat and drink *damnation* to themſelves.—Is it imagined that people will come wantonly, without knowing what they are about? I am too poor a man, *Mary*, to pretend to have an opinion, except it be as a guide for my own life; but I once took the liberty of ſpeaking to my maſter on this ſubject. I told him that I could not find there was any authority in ſcripture, for uſing the word *unworthily*, which appears to have given occaſion for the moſt horrible neglect of this holy inſtitution. He obſerved, that it ſeemed to be an *extravagant conceit*, that ſuppoſing a man ſhould be vicious, after receiving the ſacrament, that therefore he *would*, or *could* act over the crime of *Judas Iſcariot*, as the exhortation intimates!

M. I ſuppoſe that this extravagant conceit, as your maſter juſtly called it, hath frightened many an ignorant perſon from the communion-table; or at leaſt, that they have taken advantage of it, to give a reaſon to their own hearts, to ſoften the pangs of their negligence.

T. I believe you are very much in the right, in ſuppoſing them conſcious of great neglect.—The pious and learned men who compoſed theſe *exhortations*, meant to guard the table of our Lord from prophanation; but they do not appear to have been aware how far their words might frighten people, and by favouring the corruption of the heart, render many glad

to

to find an excuſe for their careleſſneſs, and groſs neglect of ſo important a duty, and thus become the innocent cauſe of the evil. To avoid an extreme on one ſide, which only madmen or atheiſts can well be ſuppoſed to fall into, with regard to a prophanation of the ſupper of our Lord, by an evil intention; theſe pious men have unluckily ſtumbled on ſuch untoward ſuggeſtions, as furniſh occaſion for the abominable neglect we complain of.

M. Do you not think they have, by ſuch expreſſions, as it were, placed lions round the table of our gracious Lord?

T. Our bleſſed Saviour could never mean this: he who invites us with all the tenderneſs of a merciful redeemer, a friend, a parent, and a guide, could never countenance ſuch over-zealous efforts to defend his commemorative ſacrifice, as defeat the end for which he inſtituted this memorial—He who died invoking heaven to forgive his *enemies*, could never mean to preſent an object of terror to the weak minds of perſons, who might be otherwiſe inclined to be his *friends*. An exceſs of pious reverence in the writers of theſe exhortations, ſeems to have betrayed them into a miſtake.

M. Suppoſing you to be in the right, how is the evil to be remedied? Why do not our rulers alter *theſe exhortations?*

T. Why not!—You have been told, that cuſtom is a *tyrant*; and that we are ſlaves to it in many inſtances, is beyond all diſpute. On the other hand, *novelty* ſometimes proves treacherous; and good men are reluctant to begin to make any change in religious concerns, leſt it ſhould ſhew an example that may be abuſed, and attempts be made to change on, till the ſubſtance be loſt in *novelty*: of this there are ſome inſtances in the world. I am ſenſible this rule of conduct has danger in it alſo. There is a degree of imperfection in every thing: happy when we can ſhoot the evil as it flies! In this happy land, where every man is free to think and act, provided he does not offend againſt peace and good order, every one may *correct himſelf* in whatever he finds amiſs.

M. But every one cannot think ſo well for himſelf, as others may think for him.

T. For this reaſon, errors ſhould indeed be rectified by law: perhaps this is one of the things, which the church may think belongs to the *goſpel*, and too tender to be meddled with.

M. If

M. If learned men are *fallible*, why ſhould not their miſtakes be corrected, as well as other people's?

T. True: the *miſtakes* of the learned ſhould be corrected by the *experience* of the *wiſe*: knowledge drawn from experience, is a better guide than *learning*. My maſter uſed to ſay, "that the higheſt pitch of learning, chiefly teaches us modeſty, and keeps us humble: that the beſt uſe of learning, is to ſpeak plainly to all the world, and to tell our thoughts of things freely; to lead the blind, and inſtruct the ignorant: that a ſincere confeſſion of ignorance, is one of the faireſt and ſureſt teſtimonies of judgment: that men are apt to loſe themſelves in depths of learning, which no human underſtanding can fathom: that the reaſon of things, lies in a narrow compaſs, common-ſenſe being ten times more uſeful than any other ſenſe."

M. But you ſay theſe were very *pious* men!

T. I ſuppoſe they were; and I think we are under great obligations to them; but if there are really no ſuch words in the ſcriptures, as *unworthy receiving*, and theſe are *their* words, and not the words of God, whatever good meaning the writers might have, if they erred in judgment, and treated this part of their ſubject in a manner not adapted to the capacity of the generality of the people: if time has given a new face to things, and there is nothing contrary to ſound religion in dropping the uſe of certain words, why ſhould they be continued? The Liturgy, with very few exceptions, is a moſt excellent, pious, and ſcriptural compoſition: but if it hath happened in proceſs of time, through the power of example, and the neglect of *precept*, that miſtaken opinions have been adopted; and ſome very clear, ſtrong, and urgent exhortations, in a different form, are become neceſſary to be made, and repeated, line by line, and ſabbath-day by ſabbath-day, till the clergy ſhall bring back their loſt ſheep to the fold, doth not good and ſound religion require ſuch to be made?

M. As we have the liberty of uſing our own underſtandings, in the concerns of the next world, as well as in relation to this; every individual ſhould conſider how far ſuch expreſſions, in the exhortations, are to be taken in ſo *ſevere* a ſenſe, as they are expreſt.

T. Yes:

T. Yes: but if they *are* really taken in ſo horrible a ſenſe, I think they ſhould be dropt.

M. You ſurprized me: Do you ſay, there is no authority in ſcripture for the expreſſion *unworthy receiving?*

T. Yes; and it is moſt true that I never could find any ſuch thing. Moreover, it always appeared to me a glaring abſurdity, for the miniſter to invite his congregation to come to the table of our Lord, and at the ſame time threaten them with *damnation* if they did come to it, ſhould they partake of of his ſupper *unworthily*. It would be good common-ſenſe, if a clergyman were to ſay to his congregation, "If any of you perſecute or defraud your neighbour, or practiſe uncleanneſs, drunkenneſs, ſwearing or lying, and intend to go on in the ſame courſe, you cannot expect any good from the ſacrament: if you come to the table of our Lord with ſuch intentions, you are guilty of mockery; and add this ſin to your other iniquities; but if you only *fear*, that you may hereafter offend in any ſuch inſtance, and therefore decline this duty, as if the devil would certainly enter into you on account of your receiving, you reverſe all the rules of common-ſenſe, and are the moſt unhappy fools upon earth. The devil may, with great propriety, be ſaid to be in you, if you do not receive, becauſe you do not receive. Awe and reverence, with fear not to offend, are proofs of ſincerity: but there cannot be a ſtronger evidence, that the devil prevails in your hearts, ſo far as men are bewitched by their ſins, than the very reaſon, that I hear you have given for not accepting the invitation to come to the ſupper of our bleſſed Lord. The moſt ſovereign remedy againſt ſuch deviliſh witchcraft, is a ſincere participation of this commemorative ſacrifice, in remembrance of the death of that Saviour, who expired on the croſs, to make atonement for your ſins, if you ſincerely repent of them, and amend your lives." In ſuch terms as theſe, might a worthy clergyman addreſs his congregation; for nothing can be more true, than that theſe are the moſt ſilly perſons, with reſpect to falſe reaſoning, and the negligence which attends it. I remember you told me once, of ſome of your acquaintance, who acknowledged that they were *afraid* to receive, leſt they might hereafter be guilty of ſome ſin: as if the

elements conſecrated to the greateſt and moſt important purpoſe, would make their bad condition worſe. You may perceive what a proof this is of their ſtupidity or perverſeneſs, for if they really think their condition is *bad*, they ſeem to be extremely abſurd in their concluſion, if they do not *receive*, in hopes to make it *better*. Either way, they act without the leaſt conſiſtency: If their condition is ſo bad, why do they not *mend* it? If this is a *means* of mending it, why do they not *uſe* it? Do they endeavour to find out reaſons for plunging themſelves into diſtreſs and miſery?—They are *frightened* in regard to *this* part of the *chriſtian worſhip!* Is prayer offered up to the throne of God, leſs ſacred? Is not the celebration of the Lord's-ſupper performed by *prayer*, as well as *breaking of bread?*

M. I mentioned to you ſeveral of my acquaintance, who are really in this ſituation, without reaſon, or directly contrary to it; for though they declare their fears and apprehenſions, yet in the ſame breath they acknowledge, that they did truly and earneſtly repent of their ſins, and were in love and charity with their neighbours, and intended to lead a new life, and follow the commandments of God.

T. What then were they afraid of? It is upon theſe terms that the miniſter bids them draw near with *faith*, and take the holy ſacrament *to their comfort*, making their humble confeſſion to Almighty God.

M. One would not imagine that any perſon in this temper of mind, could have ſuch ſcruples; but ſtill they ſay, they are *afraid of receiving unworthily.*

T. This is their *misfortune*, or their *crime!* Will they *read the ſcriptures?* If they ſeek, and do not find a ſingle ſyllable of *unworthy receiving*, will their minds be ſo far at reſt? Will *they* receive as others do? Is there ſo vaſt a difference between one man and another, neither being remarkably *good*, or remarkably *evil!* If the *intention* is good, there can be no ſuch thing as *unworthy receiving*, except in the inſtance, of groſs ignorance of the nature and deſign of the ſacrament; and in this caſe, though the perſon receiving cannot be ſaid to receive *worthily*, yet the mercy of God may extend to the good intention. The only complaint in the ſcriptures, is that of St. *Paul*, who ſpeaking

of the *Corinthians*, informs us, they ſo far forgot that the ſacrament was a ſolemn, ſpiritual commemoration of the death of *Chriſt*, that they met as at a feaſt, and were guilty of *intemperance*; and for this reaſon they were *puniſhed* with various diſeaſes, and ſundry kinds of death, not *damnation*; for it is plain the Apoſtle meant to inform them, that if they repented and amended, this, like other ſins, would be forgiven them.

M. I comprehend the meaning of the Apoſtle; but was it not ſtrange, that ſo ſoon after the death of our Saviour, the *Corinthians* ſhould fall into ſo groſs a practice?

T. Groſs it was, indeed! but the negligence of many, at this time, in *not receiving*, is not leſs wonderful! Common-ſenſe has ever been the ſame in all ages; and we have as clear lights to guide ourſelves by, at the diſtance of ſeventeen hundred years, as they had at ſeventeen years. Fooliſh people may be alarmed; but how can we guard againſt ſuch kinds of *folly?* Let us not be the *dupes* of *iniquity!* St. *Paul*'s declaration to the people of *Corinth*, cannot be applicable to the people of *England*. The Church of *England* makes intemperance on this occaſion, impracticable. The Chriſtians of *Corinth* were very fooliſh or wicked, and the Apoſtle corrected them: but a man who ſhould drink a draught of wine at the communion-table, would, in our church, be deemed a *mad man*. No one, I ſay, *could* be guilty of this prophanation in our church, whoſe diſcipline admits of no ſuch exceſs, unleſs his brains were turned; and in ſuch caſe, we could hardly ſay that it was a ſin. You have read the opinion and inſtruction of a learned and pious Archbiſhop (*a*), in regard to the many frivolous excuſes uſually made, for not receiving the ſacrament. Excuſes will not avail: the Almighty Father knoweth the heart: he hath commanded, by his Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, and he will be *obeyed*, or he will *puniſh!*—As you muſt be ſenſible, that this part of your religion is at leaſt as neceſſary as any other part; and what part is not neceſſary; you will therefore conſider this inſtitution, as preparatory to that good life, which all people aſpire at, who are not given

(*a*) Dr. *Synge*, Archbiſhop of *Tuam*, Part I. page 47.

given up to work wickedneſs: but it is not the perfection of a good life: No: it is that which proves us to be Chriſtians in heart and intention; but it influences life only, as other parts of religion do. It is the moſt ſolemn part, indeed, as generally received; but every part is ſolemn. Our Saviour ſays, "Come unto me, all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt." A very tender and perſuaſive invitation! A very great and important offer! Where is the child of man who is not in want of relief? The ſacrament of our Lord's ſupper, cannot fail of affording relief; but it is abſurd to imagine, there are any marvellous qualities in it unexplainable. The good muſt ſpring from good intentions, and a good heart, reminded of the end and deſign of the ſufferings of a bleeding Saviour!—Theſe ungrateful people ſay, they muſt not receive unworthily:—To be worthy to receive any marks of divine favour, is true only as we refer ourſelves to the merits of *Chriſt*: but to be afraid leſt we ſhould receive *unworthily*, in the ſenſe which theſe unhappy people apprehend, is folly and madneſs!—Do you not perceive, that the *neglect* is criminal, and draws on all the conſequences dreaded. The conſciouſneſs of neglect, ought to ſting the boſom with a ſcorpion's point! The fierce winds that blow; the loud thunder-ſtorm; and the lightening's blaſting fire, all reproach in moſt dreadful terms: "*Thou haſt forgotten thy friend, thy Saviour and thy God! Go, ſhameleſs man; and if thou feeleſt no torture in thy boſom, thou art the more undone!*"

M. O my father, who can bear this!

T. I hope that you and I would rather bear a poniard in our boſoms!—Indeed, *Mary*, were I a preacher of the goſpel, I would never ceaſe recommending the neceſſity of a duty, in which the voice of gratitude and true ſelf-love, unite their utmoſt force with the call of heaven, to ſnatch our fellow-creatures from a precipice of deſtruction. Methinks I would not ceaſe, from the firſt to the laſt day of the revolving year, to urge this duty. I would be faithful to my Lord and Maſter! I would think of his dying words!

M. You do this whilſt you ſo kindly beſtow your inſtruction upon me.

T. I think it juſt: I think it reaſonable. My conſcience demands it of me. I feel myſelf armed in the cauſe of Heaven; and truſt that he who ſubdued all the powers of darkneſs, would defend me, were I expoſed naked to the compleateſt armour that ever graced a ſoldier's breaſt. This ſhould be the firſt great leſſon of Chriſtianity: we ſhould all think ourſelves bound in obedience to our ſovereign Benefactor, *never* to give up this point, whilſt the mind can diſcern truth, the eye the light, or the warm blood flows in our veins. *Chriſt* hath commanded us to remember him, by a certain token; *can* we remember him, and diſregard ſuch token? Shall he ſay, "It is my pleaſure to be remembered thus;" and ſhall any of us preſume to anſwer, "No: if we remember you, it ſhall be in our own way." That they do follow their own way, and decline the remembrance of him, is ſo lamentable a tale, it wounds the heart of every truſty friend to God, or men! Judge you of this, when I tell you, that I remember well to have heard my maſter ſay, of fourſcore young men, whom he examined at different times, in order to chuſe a ſervant, educated in reading and writing well, and conſequently higher than the common run of domeſtics; upon the queſtion being aſked, not *two* of them were *Chriſtians*, *in this view* of *remembering Chriſt*.

M. Not two in fourſcore!

T. No: there was but *one*; and he had not received the ſacrament for three years before!

M. Good God! Was this in *London?* I hope the women ſervants are not ſo careleſs!

T. I believe not quite ſo bad; one often finds five women, at the communion-table, to two men.

M. Is it the notion of a preparation which deters ſo many? What do you think is neceſſary?

T. We ſhould at all times examine the ſtate of our minds, but more eſpecially on this occaſion: we ſhould renew our reſolutions of acting in obedience to the laws of God. But what of this? Are not prayer and the exerciſe of charity, at all times neceſſary? Will not the occaſion, at which it is *neceſſary* to appear at the table of the Lord, induce us to collect our ſcattered thoughts, and direct them to the object of our devotion?

devotion? Then we ſhould reflect with the warmer gratitude on the mercies received from that gracious Redeemer, through his agonizing paſſion and bitter death, and all the benefits we reap by his ſufferings. This is the object which we mean to commemorate. The exact meaſure of the attention to it is impoſſible to be adjuſted in this, more than in the common concerns of life: it will differ with regard to the attention of the mind, as one man differs from another, and every man from himſelf at different times. And if the heart ſhould happen to be under any peculiar circumſtance, which may divide or diſtract the thoughts, God, who made the heart, will compaſſionate our infirmities. Perchance in the progreſs of your life, you will meet with ſome people, who treat the notion of preparation as totally unneceſſary: ſtrictly ſpeaking, it is the ordinary practice and tenor of our lives, directed by the rules of virtue and religion, which conſtitute the true preparation. But mind my words: if it is obvious beyond all contradiction, that we ought at all times to war againſt every ſenſual deſire, evil paſſion, or worldly care, which may obſtruct the freedom of our ſpirits, and tye them down to this poor earth; ſurely we ought to exert ourſelves upon this occaſion, when we make ſo diſtinguiſhed an offering of the ſoul to the Son of God! And what is there in all this, more than ariſes from the occaſions which occur continually in common life, with reſpect to temporal advantages, or the preſervation of the body? There are ſome who never turn their backs upon the communion-table, though they knew not when they entered the church, that the ſacrament of the Lord's-ſupper was to be adminiſtered there, at that time. You may clearly perceive from what I have ſaid, that the capital evil ariſes from the making light of the neglect of this inſtitution, and the taking pains to cheriſh a miſtaken opinion, as if of the two evils, the duty were better let alone, than performed without the greateſt imaginable purity of mind. Form to yourſelf an opinion, how ſeldom ſuch purity can be acquired! or if it is ever acquired by the majority of our fellow-chriſtians? This is no reaſon for not partaking of this holy ordinance. But what can the conſequence of the neglect be? They remain ſo much the more impure

impure and profligate, leaving the ſoul expoſed to the terrors of Almighty Vengeance!——This ſubject is ſo intereſting, I would not oppreſs you with the conſideration. Let us talk of it again ſome other day.

M. It is very intereſting, indeed! and I have ſeveral circumſtances to mention, which have fallen within the compaſs of my ſcanty knowledge.——I ſhall be glad to hear your ſentiments, whenever you pleaſe to communicate them.

CONVERSATION III.

M. YOUR laſt leſſons made ſuch an impreſſion on my mind, that I long for the ſequel!

T. You mean the ſacrament of our Lord's-ſupper! This is a ſubject indeed! Would to God it were more conſidered! We ſhould not then be ſo profligate as we are; nor would the gallows bend with the weight of iniquity. But forget not, my dear *Mary*, that this, like other duties of religion, muſt be conducted in ſpirit and in truth! It cannot fail of being obvious to your underſtanding, that if temporal life is ſo dear to the children of men, that they part with every thing on earth for the ſake of it; life eternal being ſo incomparably a greater object, ſurely we ſhould do the ſame for this alſo. Whatever pretenſions they may make to wiſdom, the worſt people are certainly the greateſt fools for themſelves, and the greateſt enemies to good order.

M. Do you think that the many murders, robberies, and violences committed, may be aſcribed to the neglect of the ſacrament?

T. There can be no doubt, but that the want of religion, is the cauſe of every immoral action. Thoſe who neglect the ſacrament, do for the ſame reaſon, generally neglect prayer to God; and thoſe that neglect their prayers, live as without God in the world. Now, my child, of theſe, ſuch as have parents, who in violation of the moſt ſacred obligations, never gave them chriſtian inſtruction, but ſhew a wicked example; as ſoon as they contract a habit of idleneſs, or an immoderate love of amuſement, and reduce themſelves to great ſtreights, what monſtrous lengths will not the bold and daring go, till the gallows cuts the thread of their abominable lives! Are they not ſad ſtories with which our news-papers abound, of the number of young men, who end their days on the gallows?

M. Sad

M. Sad indeed! It is not to be imagined, that many of theſe have appeared at the table of our Lord, or ever uſed the name of *Chriſt*,—except in prophane ſwearing!—I believe I did not tell you, when we laſt talked on this ſubject, that ſome of my acquaintance are ſo fooliſh, they imagine, that becauſe they fall ſo ſhort of the perfection they ſuppoſe a Chriſtian may arrive at; therefore it is in vain for them to think of any improvement, beyond common honeſty; and with regard to this, it does not appear to me,—that they chuſe to be under *much awe!*

T. Much awe!—Take away religion and the gallows, what a ſtate we ſhould all be in! But with regard to ſpiritual improvement, the abſurdity of theſe people ſurpaſſes deſcription. What ſhould you think of me, were I to ſay, "I am not ſure of the beſt crop, that it is poſſible for my grounds to produce, therefore I will not ſow my land?" Theſe people make their lazineſs and pretence to humility, the foundation of folly; and run into deſtruction, under a notion of avoiding it.

M. Indeed, they appear ſo very ſhort-ſighted, one would imagine they were not in their right mind.

T. Conſider how *this* caſe ſtands. "I have an ague, and fever: my phyſician is a very able man: I depend upon him; he orders me to take the bark: he pronounces that my life is loſt if I will not take it: I am ſatisfied that he means to preſerve my life, and aſſured that his preſcription is the beſt in the world. I tell him, that I am convinced it is ſo; but that I will *not* follow it, *becauſe* I am afraid it will make my ſickneſs worſe than it was before."—Would you not think that this was contradicting myſelf, ſetting up my opinion againſt reaſon, and murdering myſelf with my own hand?

M. The leaſt that I could think, would be, that you was *delirious.*

T. By not obeying the commands of *Chriſt*, they ſhut themſelves out of his doors; and ſo far from courting his protection, they do not allow themſelves to be commonly courteous to him. Inſtead of ſeeking an opportunity of making their peace with him, they ſeek a reaſon to avoid his preſence.—View it in whatever light you will, it comes to this at laſt, that *Chriſt* hath commanded all his followers to com-

commemorate his death by breaking of bread, until his coming again in triumphant majeſty, ſurrounded by the hoſt of heaven, to judge both the living and the dead! What appearance, *Mary*, will theſe children of diſobedience *then* make?—What excuſes will avail them in that hour? Will the infinitely wiſe and juſt judge of the whole earth, accept of that plea, which you in the ſimplicity of your heart, and the dictates of your conſcience, cannot allow to have *any* weight? If I had diſobeyed *my* maſter, and told him, I diſobeyed him, becauſe I was a *frail creature*, and honoured him highly, and was therefore afraid my obedience would be imperfect, and offend him: what do you think he would have ſaid?

M. That you was a fool, or a mad man, or a wicked, deſigning fellow, who meant him no good.

T. What leſs could he think? One or the other of theſe opinions he muſt have entertained. To act upon a principle of diſobeying, becauſe of our *frailty*, is deſtroying all diſtinctions of good and evil. Whether our *reaſon* and *common-ſenſe* are pleaded, or our faith ſupported by reaſon and common-ſenſe, we muſt ſtand or fall by our *obedience* or *diſobedience*.

M. What evil ſpirit lurks in the mind, which thus deceives the ſoul?

T. What is it, *Mary*, but a habit of vice and diſſoluteneſs? It is this which makes ſo many ingenious in cheating themſelves, againſt the cleareſt conviction. If they do not know the word of God, ſurely it muſt be their own fault; and if they do know it, and will not remember their Saviour, they do not in effect acknowledge him as a ſaviour. Can you tell me then, what religion they are of? The difficulty in this caſe, is in the will, not in the action itſelf, for this is of the moſt familiar kind. The ſentence of the impenitent is, "*Go, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire!*" Now, if *diſobedience* doth not imply *impenitence*, the meaning of the word is not known to me. Sober perſons in all ages, have complained of immorality and irreligion: and how have they judged, but from *apparent diſobedience?* By obedience only can we give proof of our ſincerity: and every real Chriſtian that thinketh *he ſtandeth, takes heed not to fall*;

and him that is fallen, riſes again, and graſps the feet of his bleſſed Lord, whoſe tenderneſs *is* overcome by no provocation.

M. Where repentance comes in time.

T. He that delayeth, forgeteth that there is no repentance in the grave. How little do we know of ourſelves! When our Saviour queſtioned St. *Peter*, "*Simon Bar Jonas*, loveſt thou me?" he anſwered, "Lord, Thou knoweſt that I love thee:" and there is good reaſon to believe he did: but upon the trial, a miſtaken ſelf-love, and fear of danger, tempted this good man to tranſgreſs.

M. Happy is he who returneth ſo truly to his duty, as St. *Peter* did!

T. Thrice happy was this Apoſtle, who gave ſuch ſhining proof of zeal for his Maſter, by his *obedience* even unto death! After the example of our Saviour, he died in defence of truth. In comparing the workings of the human heart, there is an amazing likeneſs in good things, as well as in bad. Have you obſerved, how naturally we ſeek opportunities of obliging thoſe whom we love? How glad we are to receive their commands; and how we delight in ſerving them? Conſider what *obedience* is: it is moſt ſweet and pleaſant to the heart! Whether as a friend, a parent, a maſter, or a prince, we all delight in it; not as tyrants to exact the baſe ſervitude of ſlaves, but the reaſonable ſervice and duty of a friend, a child, a ſervant, or a ſubject.

M. I am ſenſible that the world cannot ſubſiſt without obedience. In common life the ſervant who does not learn to obey, what is he good for?

T. Neither the ſervant, nor the child, can do themſelves honour in their reſpective ſtations, but as they are obedient, and act towards others, as they would think it right to be done by in the ſame ſituation. In temporal concerns, we are obedient to laws, and act as ſubjects to an earthly prince. If in heavenly duties, we are all the children of one common Father, let us poſſeſs our minds with a real filial piety and reverence! If we are ſervants to one great Lord and Maſter, even That Saviour, for whoſe honour we are now pleading, let us conſider what fidelity we owe to him: let us act, as if

we

we knew what belongs to a man and a Chriſtian. If we do not pay the *obedience* due to *Him*, we do neither more nor leſs, in effect, than renounce our religion. If we conſider what condition we are in, when our ſpirits are ſtubborn and diſobedient (as they certainly are when we diſobey), we ſhall find the fire of reſentment burn in the breaſt of man, juſtly provoked; ought we not to conclude, that the *Almighty Vengeance* is preparing? We are taught by the word of God, that the *children of diſobedience* are the objects of his wrath. Learn from the things of this world, where reaſon guides, what to expect in the world to come: though the fleſh decays, the ſpirit is not extinguiſhed. Were this lawn to burſt under us, and yon ſtately oaks be removed into this valley; yet, if *we* ſtand immoveable in our obedience, the earth may melt with heat, or be hurled into the ſea, we ſhall be happy in the iſſue! My dear *Mary*, carry in your hand and heart, the ſweet offering of *obedience*, and peace will attend your ſteps. But if you ſhould be deprived of all worldly comfort, you will be the more a gainer. You may even die by violence; but you will die a martyr: you will finiſh your courſe in the great cauſe of *Truth*, which is the cauſe of Heaven. Truth is the repreſentative of the Almighty! You will engage his favour, who is the fountain of everlaſting happineſs!—

M. I wiſh they could hear you talk of *obedience*; and conſider how they treſpaſs by *diſobedience!*

T. Obedience, in this inſtance of the ſupper of our Lord, I conſider as the touchſtone, to try what manner of ſpirit we are of: if in this caſe we do not obey, what proof can we give of ſubmiſſion to the diſpenſations of Providence, or obedience to divine laws, in any other inſtance? Love, as ſhewn by *obedience*, is fulfilling the law and the goſpel. How can we obey the moral precepts of *Chriſtianity*, without obedience to the laws of Chriſt? And partial obedience, obedience without remembering of him, is a contradiction.—

M. Surely, if theſe faulty people would conſider this argument, they would repent!

T. If we ſo directly diſobey the great Founder of Chriſtianity, in an inſtance ſo immediately reſpecting his own perſon, how can we be ſaid to be of *his* religion? If he is our

law-giver, our ſovereign, the mighty prince of peace, and eternal judge!—can we *diſobey* him, and be at peace!

M. I believe theſe queſtions would confound them. Truth would ſtrike them *dumb*, if it did not ſtrike them *dead!*

T. They pretend to fear God, and well may they tremble at his frowns; but it is not a fear that is accompanied with love, for then we ſhould ſee the effects by their obedience.—Why will they abſent themſelves from his table? The ſame merciful Saviour, who now ſitteth at the right hand of God, when he appeared in human nature upon the earth, once dined with a Phariſee. A woman, who had been a grievous ſinner, conſcious of her guilt, came with diſhevelled locks, according to the cuſtom of *Jewiſh* penitents, to the table of this Phariſee, to implore the mercy of our Lord. The *Jews* generally went bare-footed, except the ſandals which they wore, and theſe they threw off within doors. You will eaſily imagine, that it was their cuſtom to waſh their feet often. The Phariſee whom our bleſſed Lord honoured with his company, did not receive him as the Meſſiah: but the woman, with all her ſins and imperfections on her head, had juſter notions of him, and a true conſciouſneſs of her own offences. In theſe circumſtances, tears flowing in ſtreams from her eyes, ſhe bedewed our Saviour's feet; and as a token of her extreme humiliation, ſhe wiped them with her hair. Such was the effect of her contrition! As a mark of her high reſpect, agreeable to the cuſtom of the country, of pouring or dropping oil on the head, ſhe went further, and anointed his feet with a precious ointment. He who ſees the hearts of men, could not be ignorant of hers, and bid her be comforted, for that her ſins were forgiven her. The maſter of the houſe was offended within himſelf at this ſaying. Our Saviour, no leſs acquainted with *his* heart, with equal courteſy and tenderneſs, propoſed a queſtion to him: Who might be ſuppoſed to ſhew moſt gratitude, the debtor who ſhould be forgiven five hundred, or him who owing but fifty pence, ſhould alſo be forgiven the debt? This was an irreſiſtible appeal to his heart, and no leſs a perſuaſive to repentance. However unbelieving the *Phariſee* might be, it is a moſt inſtructive leſſon to *us*; for if our Lord ſhewed ſuch great tenderneſs on occa-

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ſion of dining with a man, not then a Chriſtian, can we ſuppoſe that he will relax in his tenderneſs to us, who believe in him, if we obey him as faithful ſervants, and partake of his ſupper? Whilſt we retain our reaſon, can we renounce our religion! O my daughter, look round you, and ſee how nature obeys the laws of her God and governor! Theſe ſluggiſh cows, and harmleſs ſheep; the ſporting lambkin, or the proud majeſtic horſe, are they not all under laws in their reſpective kinds? Behold the ant, and all theſe creeping things; the millions that feed upon theſe leaves; the birds of the air; and the little fiſh that ſport in this rivulet: every thing that the earth produces, and the earth itſelf, our common parent, do they not move in obedience to the great Lord of all? Caſt your eyes up to the firmament, and conſider how the ſun, moon, and ſtars, and all the hoſt of heaven obey the laws of God! Shall we, who are more noble than theſe, degrade ourſelves by diſobedience! Doth not the heart ſhudder at the thought of offering ſo unreaſonable an offence to Him who gave us reaſon, and made us capable of underſtanding his will! Conſider the conduct of thoſe who diſobey *Him* by whom the worlds were made, the expreſs image of the eternal Father! *He* requires the reaſonable ſervice of men to remember him, and his *love* for them: can gratitude withhold ſo reaſonable an homage?

M. My heart chills at the thought!

T. What doth he ſay?—"Do this in remembrance of me: obſerve this my laſt injunction; break bread and drink wine, as a token of your remembrance of me." And what ſhall *we* ſay in anſwer? "Remember thee! Who *ſhould* we remember? Thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the living God! As long as memory ſhall hold her ſeat: as long as I ſhall draw the vital air, let this remembrance be ſtamped on my heart; and when the grave ſhall open wide her jaws, to receive my body, let my ſpirit aſcend to him that gave it: for thou, O *Chriſt*, art the hope of the ends of the earth, and every knee ſhould bow when thou art named!" Such might be the declaration of any ſober Chriſtian. Can any thing be more natural, than to do honour to the memory of our departed friends? The virtues of your dear mother, ſtill render her

moſt grateful to my heart: ſhall I feel leſs honour for him, who was my mighty deliverer, and my friend, who ſhed his blood for my ſake, that I might not periſh for ever! Shall the affections which are given us by *God*, be exerciſed only for man, when he hath commanded us to *love* him?

M. O God of heaven, where doth thy mercy end!

T. His *mercy* is boundleſs as eternity; and as eternity is his *juſtice* too!——O gratitude, to what diſtant region art thou fled, that man ſhould forget his God!

M. Indeed, my father, when I think of thoſe important words, "*Do this in remembrance of me*," as coming from the mouth of the Son of God, I feel myſelf *honoured*, as well as *obliged* in the higheſt degree.

T. So, indeed, you may. The occaſion and circumſtances of his death, the time and place; the friendſhip in which he lived with mankind; the vaſt and important ſervices done them, call for the warmeſt remembrance. Bring him before the eyes of your underſtanding, and indulge the ſenſibility of your heart: ſurvey his mild and heavenly countenance, inviting the children of men to happineſs eternal! Then place before him a ſtubborn and perverſe generation: behold his awful brow and indignation! See tears of ſorrow flow from his majeſtic eyes! Hear him repeat theſe tender, mournful words: *Did you but know what belongs to your peace; but alas! you have hid it from your eyes: you ſeek your own deſtruction!*—Let our neighbours think of this: and if they ſtill entertain any fond notion, that their *negligence* will be received as a mark of awful reſpect; or that it will *not* be received as a mark of ingratitude and rebellion, we muſt conclude, that they have renounced their *reaſon*, as well as their *religion*.

M. O my father, I think they can no longer treat ſo *true* a friend, ſo great a benefactor, with *mockery*; or *hazard his wrath*, by ſaying, they mean by their abſence from his table, to appeaſe it!

T. As well may they preſent the poor with ſtones, and ſay they mean to relieve their hunger, as treat him with ſuch mock regard. Indeed, my dear *Mary*, their conduct is abſurd: it is monſtrous! If he preſerved us from the effects of ſin and death eternal, upon condition of repentance, to what

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ſhall *they* betake themſelves? Where ſhall they ſeek for ſuccour on any other terms?

M. I hope they will go, and ſin no more, leſt the wrath of Heaven ſhould be their portion!

T. If diſobedience is not *ſin*, obedience is not *righteouſneſs*; truth is not *truth*; all diſtinctions are loſt, and man no nobler than a beaſt.

M. But give me leave to ſay, they do not carry things ſo far.

T. I know they do not, in *word*; but in *deed* they make themſelves worſe than infidels; for he who does not believe in the religion of *Chriſt*, cannot be expected to perform any duty relating to it: but to acknowledge the infinite debt of gratitude which we owe to the Son of God, and not to comply with the *ten-fold obligation* ariſing from it, to do a much greater thing had he required, it ſeems to render ſuch perſons more ſtupid than the beaſt that periſhes. Ten-fold obligation, did I ſay! Our gratitude ſhould be proportioned, as far as our powers of mind extend, to the exalted happineſs which he hath promiſed in return. O *Mary*, there is an impious lazineſs and indifference at the bottom of this ſtory, which is horrible beyond deſcription!

M. It ſeems moſt terribly abſurd to talk of danger at a diſtance, and not ſee it at their doors; to be reſerved, by pretending that they mean to avoid offence; and by That reſerve offend moſt highly!

T. You judge exactly well: We muſt uſe our reaſon, or how can we judge of any thing? To die for *fear* of dying, ſometimes happens: may not this diſobedience be death eternal, for *fear* of death *eternal?*

M. One would think it impoſſible to conſider the celebration of the Lord's-ſupper, as not carrying with it the force of a divine command?

T. That it is poſſible for people to neglect the plaineſt duty, is apparent, for they do neglect this *pleaſing*, *dread* command. But in good truth, my daughter, I apprehend that thoſe who are thus negligent, when they come to look into their own hearts, are not ſo much *afraid* of offending in *this inſtance*, as ſecretly inclined or intentioned to offend in *ſome others*.—This muſt

muſt be the caſe of many. Some lean more to the ſide of the knave and perverſe, and ſome to the fool or abſurd!

M. Granting this, yet I wiſh with all my heart, that the words in the communion-ſervice, relating to the *Corinthians*, and ſo falſely underſtood by ſo many of us, were omitted; at the ſame time, that the texts relating to the eating or drinking damnation or condemnation, under the circumſtances of thoſe *Corinthians*, were ſo explained, that the excuſe of fear of rendering our condition the worſe for receiving, may no longer prevail amongſt us.

T. I wiſh ſo too: at the ſame time I muſt tell you, that it ſeems probable, from the conduct of theſe timorous perſons, that they are equally negligent with regard to other parts of the worſhip of God, and the knowledge of his word. They do not read the ſcriptures, and therefore know not what is contained in them. This is the ſpring from whence ſuch foul ſtreams of folly and iniquity flow. The doctrine in queſtion, is ſo plain, they might read it running if they pleaſed. It is very apparent, that theſe careleſs people, in order, as they pretend, to avoid a great ſin, which there is no greater danger of, than of committing any of the moſt notorious crimes, do really fall into a high offence, and ſubject themſelves to the puniſhment of it. If a man were to perform the office of a hangman on himſelf, for a crime which he preſumed he might hereafter commit, if he did not hang himſelf; could the *inqueſt* poſſibly do leſs than bring him in *lunatic?* The caſe ſeems to have a ſtrong likeneſs. Does it not make your heart bleed to think, that light ſhould be preſented to a fellow-chriſtian, and he ſhould chuſe darkneſs? That heaven ſhould be ſet before his eyes, and he ſhould blind himſelf, as if he meant to plunge into hell!

M. O my father, my heart bleeds! If my tears could avail, they would flow in plenty! It is a dreadful thing indeed to draw back from the commands of *Chriſt*, for fear of being ſubject to the wrath of God; and by thus drawing back, become an object of Almighty Vengeance!

T. Truly dreadful is their ſtate, who blindly miſtake, or wilfully neglect the means of piety, and forfeit the happineſs

pineſs which is promiſed! What can we do more than pray (*a*), that they might be converted and *live*?

M. My heart glows within me whilſt we are talking of remembering the Saviour of the world! (*b*)

T. How did the hearts of the *diſciples* glow, when they firſt converſed with him after his crucifixion, upon occaſion of their meeting him upon the road! What ſenſe of gratitude can we entertain, which is not due to him;—or what praiſes can we offer, which he has not a title to?

M. His goodneſs, greatneſs, and mercy, ſhould ever be the ſubject of our praiſe!

T. Can you view this azure ſky, and yon milky clouds; theſe verdant fields; or the ſweet ſhade which the lofty trees afford, without thinking of the hand that made them? Here reigns a ſolemn ſilence! All is huſh as the grave, except the tinkling of ſheep-bells;— the ſinging of birds;— the murmuring of this gentle brook, and our own voices: yet, to your ear of reaſon, and eye of faith, do not theſe objects, and this bright canopy of the heavens, proclaim aloud, that there is a God who made and upholdeth them? Can we ſurvey ſuch glories, and not feel the warmeſt gratitude? Do

(*a*) O bleſſed *Jeſus*, whoſe blood was ſpilt in agonizing pain, turn the ſteps of the ungodly to thy righteous paths, that they may no longer walk in the ways of rebellion! *Turn their hearts, O Lord*, and let them behold the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes for ever! O *Chriſt*, thou Son of the living God, bring the ignorant, the unwary, and perverſe, to a right ſenſe of their condition! Strengthen ſuch as do ſtand; comfort and help the weak-hearted; raiſe up them that fall, and let not thy blood be ſpilt in vain for them!

(*b*) Hear me, *O Father*, for his ſake, who ſits at thy right hand, the Lamb that was ſlain for the ſins of the world, that I may hold him in perpetual remembrance! Let me ſing thy praiſes, O Lord, for the mighty act of the redemption of mankind! Suffer not the world, the fleſh, or the devil, to ſtain the memory of thy merciful kindneſs to my ſoul, or prevent my obedience to the commands of thy bleſſed Son! Let me ſhow forth my thanks in a conſtant commemoration of them; and let my offering of gratitude at thy altar, be accepted as the pure incenſe of my heart! Grant this, O Father Almighty, for the ſake of the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, who died upon the croſs for the ſins of the world!

they not all appear as made expreſly for your uſe and mine? For what, indeed, hath the owner, ſave the beholding thereof? They are ours at leaſt with reſpect to the ſolid pleaſures they afford to us: and let us view them with gratitude and praiſe!

M. Theſe woods methinks ſtand in awful ſilence, as if they liſtened to our diſcourſe. I never found myſelf more deeply, or more pleaſingly affected.

T. There are happy moments of pure delight, which the contemplation of the goodneſs of God, and the wonders of his works afford, beyond all other pleaſures the heart of man can boaſt of! It is a glorious thing to enjoy all the advantages which the fields, in fine weather, furniſh to perſons of reflexion! If the works which we behold with our eyes, do not proclaim the Being and goodneſs of God! If theſe do not teach us how to think of the things which we ſee with the *eye of faith*, what is the boaſted ſuperiority of man?

M. As God hath made every thing, his will muſt be the law to every thing.

T. And yet you ſee that man, the nobleſt production, whoſe excellency conſiſts in being free, abuſes his freedom, even to revolt and diſobey him.

M. O *Chriſt*, forgive them, for they know not what they do!

T. Amen! for the *forgiveneſs part*; but I cannot ſay, they know not what they do; but that they will not do what they know they ought to do, though it is ſo very eaſy to be done. The heart cannot conceive the wonderful excellence of the works of the Creator now before us; yet, how much more wonderful is his love in the redemption of mankind, which provides for us ſuch unutterable happineſs in the vaſt circuit of eternity!

M. Alas! my father, I am afraid we ſhall never act right, ſo long as the wiſe and wealthy are negligent in their duty!

T. Wiſe, *Mary!* he only is wiſe, who is *religious*. Example hath ever been more prevalent than precept; but it is not riches, nor poverty, which conſtitutes the difference in queſtion: a conviction of what we ought to do, is ſtronger than either. But if the authority of ſcripture is not our guide, we are left to wander: if we believe it not, who ſhall be our guide? If we obſerve it not, in whom ſhall we truſt? Though the

the Almighty *would* not that the *wicked* ſhould periſh, he *cannot* alter his nature, and be infinitely merciful, wiſe, and *juſt*, and yet not exerciſe his *juſtice*, as well as his wiſdom and *mercy!* Were theſe careleſs, ſenſeleſs people, to conſider what they have at ſtake, they could not be ſuch ſluggards, cowards, and fools! It is not money, houſes, nor land, nor wives, nor children; it is happineſs or miſery eternal! Indolence in religion, like lazineſs in buſineſs, muſt be productive of miſery!

M. Did you ever talk to the 'ſquire in regard to our poor neighbours?

T. Alas, *Mary*, I am ſorry to tell you, there are but few 'ſquires who give themſelves much trouble in ſuch caſes! Sir *George* is the only perſon here, who endeavours to check the progreſs of this groſs iniquity. He ſays, if the rich would more generally exert their ſtrength among the *parochial clergy*, much might be done towards the reformation of this abuſe. If the clergy exhorted in private, as well as from the pulpit; and gentlemen would by example, as well as precept, employ their influence over their domeſtics, they could not fail of ſucceſs. If more were ſaid of the danger of *not receiving*, there would be but little occaſion for ſaying ſo much about the danger of *receiving unworthily*. And if this word *unworthily*, were omitted, the *diſuſe* would do more honour to its real ſignification, in this caſe, than the *uſe* of it can do. If the matter were fairly examined, for one to whom the *threatening* has done any ſervice, we ſhall find it attended by bad conſequences to an hundred, perhaps I may ſay, a thouſand. Have you not heard of ſome of theſe poor people, whoſe ignorance and perverſeneſs have induced them to neglect the ſacrament during their whole lives, deſire to receive it when they are upon the bed of death? Is their reaſon ſo much more enlightened, when the flame of life hangs quivering on a point, juſt ready to expire? What ſhould this mean, "I have neglected you for hundreds of thouſands of hours (*a*); you will now be pleaſed to accept of *one*. Indeed I have but one poor hour to give you, before I launch into eternity!"

(*a*) 30 years contain 262,800 hours.

M. Theſe are dreadful ſounds! and this but a terrible account of life!

T. How the reckoning will ſtand hereafter, God only knows!

M. Have you heard what was the reſult of the reverend gentleman's diſcourſe laſt *Sunday*, which you praiſed ſo much? I remember ſeveral of the congregation, who did not ſtay to communicate, retired with viſible marks of ſhame in their faces.

T. The 'ſquire's daughter, with great affability, aſked me, my opinion of the ſermon: I anſwered her enquiry without reſerve; and ſhe as candidly told me, ſhe was moſt *heartily aſhamed of turning her back on the communion-table*; adding, that ſhe had taken a reſolution, whether her parents ſhould remind her of it or not, to *receive* the very next ſacrament-day.

M. She is younger by a year than myſelf, being not quite ſixteen.

T. I think this age is ripe enough to underſtand this memorial, ſometimes called a *myſtery*; but why, I know not.

M. She hath ſo much good ſenſe, and is in every other reſpect ſo amiable, I wonder ſhe never received *before*. I dare ſay ſhe will be as good as her word.

T. Unleſs ſhe ſhould go to *London*, and *forget* it.

M. Why forget there, more than here?

T. The gay world live more in a ſtate of diſſipation; and by what I could ever diſcover, do not think ſo much either of the death of *Chriſt*, or of their own approaching death, as they ſhould do; and this you will believe, when I ſhall inform you how extravagantly they purſue their amuſements. This is the extreme into which they fall: at the ſame time, it muſt be confeſſed, that the wealthy do not neglect this duty near ſo much as the poor, who live from hand to mouth. For although theſe are more particularly the children of Providence, you ſee what numbers of them are diſobedient children, even to the diſobedience of the expreſs command of their great Lord and Maſter!

M. O may their hearts be turned to obey the call of their Saviour and their God; that they may be ſaved from the deſtruction which hangeth over their heads!

CONVERSATION. IV.

T. HAVE you digeſted the doctrine of obedience, *Mary?* Is it ſweet to your ears? Or have you any pride in your heart, which gives it a harſh and unpleaſing ſound?

M. O my father, I know that it is more pleaſing to God, than all the blood of bulls or goats which was ever offered to him by *Jew* or *Gentile!*

T. Obedience, with regard to the remembrance of the ſacrifice offered to God by the blood of *Chriſt*, was the ſubject of our diſcourſe. Have you had any opportunity of trying if you could make any impreſſion on your acquaintance? Can you make them underſtand a little common-ſenſe, with regard to this important object?

M. You know I ſpoke of it ſome time ago; and I hope ſoon to have another opportunity, and that they will hear me, as knowing I ſpeak your ſentiments, as well as my own: and they ſay you are a very honeſt man, and a good churchman. —I have been thinking alſo of *obedience* with reſpect to this world, when I go into ſervice.

T. Whenever you go, *Mary*, if there is a bleſſing in a father's gift, a father whoſe bowels yearn for his daughter's welfare, you will have mine; and may the tender Father of mankind, on whoſe bleſſing we all depend, inſpire your heart with reſolution to obey his laws! And conſider what it is to be bleſſed by a *father!* Conſider alſo, what their condition is, whoſe conduct draws on their heads, the curſe, the ſorrow, or indignation of a parent!

M. I will expreſs my gratitude to you, by living mindful of my duty; and I hope this will ever plead for a bleſſing at the hands of God, and yours.

T. Be cautious! yet, meaſure your caution by your prudence. An exceſs of diſtruſt, may loſe you a friend, as well as guard you from an enemy. Some may probably make you

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an offer of their friendſhip, as if their hearts overflowed with benevolence for all their fellow-creatures, when they only mean to deſpoil you of your innocence. Let your confidence, therefore, in man or woman, be regulated by your miſtreſs's good counſel and advice. Avoid doing *wrong* to any one, as you would ſhun the plague: your caution need not wound your juſtice or charity. Let theſe extend to all the world, not forgetting the ſhare which is due to your enemies: nor will you think it a hard leſſon, to ſhew benevolence to an enemy, whilſt you think of obedience to the command of that Saviour, who died for thoſe who perſecuted him!—Maintain your modeſty: this once loſt, will hardly be again reſtored. It is an out-guard, and kind of inſtinct, which the Almighty hath planted, to defend the ſoul. Your gentleneſs, my dear *Mary*, which renders you ſo amiable in my eyes, may, through the perverſeneſs of ſome man's heart, expoſe you to temptations, which may prove your bane.

M. How can that be?

T. The qualities moſt precious in a woman, even her zeal in the cauſe of virtue, as if the devil envied her happineſs, as he did the innocence of our firſt parents, often prove a temptation to the vicious. Think of your chaſtity, as a gem more precious than thoſe which ſhine in kingly crowns! Had it pleaſed Heaven to preſerve your mother's life, you ſhould have been a partner in our toils and comforts. We would have led you through the dangerous paths of youth, till the good providence of God had beſtowed you happily on ſome honeſt man; unleſs death or misfortunes ſhould have firſt divided us. I am now too far advanced in years, to be your guardian, were you to ſtay with me. Your perſon is not robuſt; yet habit might give you ſtrength, whilſt your ſituation here, would probably be both ſafe and comfortable. But ſince Providence ſeems to invite you to try your fortune in a ſtate of ſervitude, go:—You have my liberty and conſent. The promiſe of ſo excellent a lady to be your teacher, and your friend, comforts my heart. May Heaven protect you! May the mighty friend and parent of mankind, reward her alſo, for all the goodneſs and charity which ſhe may ſhew to you! Surely, ſhe will find a reward here, or in heaven!

M. This

M. This is my comfort, or I ſhould tremble to think how I am to live happily without *you*, who have been ſo much a father and a friend.

T. Be cautious of the enemy which lies in ambuſh; and take care by your fidelity, to preſerve your miſtreſs's good opinion.

M. What *enemy* in ambuſh?

T. Your own paſſions: endeavour to be as wiſe as the *ſerpent*, as well as innocent as the *dove*.

M. I remember this expreſſion in the holy ſcriptures; but pray, what is the proper meaning of it?

T. This compariſon is drawn from the extraordinary wiſdom ſuppoſed to be in this animal; and though we are alſo commanded to be as *harmleſs* as a dove, yet we muſt take good care not to be ſo *fooliſh*, and fall into the ſnare by which birds are often made a prey. Want of *innocence* among thoſe who are called *wiſe*, and want of *wiſdom* among thoſe who have been *innocent*, are the chief cauſes of miſery in the world.—If your condition is not the beſt, it is far from being the worſt: there are many in which more ſollicitude is required. How much more ſevere are the labours of the hind, the toils of the manufacturer, the laborious marches of the ſoldier, and the terrors of the boiſterous element, which the mariner encounters, than ſervitude in families ſupported in affluence!

M. I have been talking with my good old friend *Jane Nurſe*. You know, ſhe was many years in ſervice, and knows what was paſſing in the world, at leaſt in her time. She has given me much good advice, how to take care of myſelf, and do my duty. But I find there are many pains and ſorrows attending a ſtate of ſervitude; and yet, ſhe ſays, in one place where ſhe ſerved, ſhe never was happier.

T. I ſuppoſe that the maſter was a good man, and conſidered that he was a *man* and a *Chriſtian*, which ſome are very apt to forget.

M. Even ſo: he was a good maſter, and he had good ſervants.

T. It ſeems to be in this, as it is in marriage: though goodneſs in either man or wife, often occaſions mutual happineſs, yet there muſt be a certain portion of good humour

and mildneſs of temper on both ſides, to complete the ſatisfaction. So it may be with regard to maſter and ſervant. As to *pains* and *ſorrows*, there are enough of them in every part of life; but they are generally created by wickedneſs or folly; and you may be ſure that your miſtreſs will have her ſhare, ariſing from your conduct, if it ſhould not be good. As a woman of ſentiment, and a Chriſtian, ſhe would feel for you and herſelf. If you are good and wiſe, and ſhe is the ſame, both will be happy. There are, indeed, a multitude of incidents in ſervitude, within the compaſs of my obſervation, which require great caution, to make the ſtream of life run clearly and ſmoothly on: every day, nay every hour, may furniſh matter to embitter life, or to render it ſweet, ſo much depends on the good ſenſe and virtue of the maſter or miſtreſs, and ſo much on the ſervant alſo. The world is all before you, not quite ſo full of ſnares as ſome people repreſent it; yet ſo bad, which ever way I turn, *danger* preſents itſelf. Had I ability to place you as an apprentice to a trade in ſome great city, I ſhould not think you ſo ſafe, as in *ſervitude* to ſo excellent a lady. Serve her with love, with faithfulneſs, and zeal, and ſhe will be a mother to you. There are not many ſo well inclined, or ſo able to *teach*; and but few ſervants ſo much diſpoſed to *learn*, as I believe you are. Your good conduct can hardly fail of ſecuring her favour.

M. I will ſtrive to ſecure it; and rather give up my life than my gratitude.

T. I hope you will. You are to underſtand, that in theſe days of *pleaſure* and *diſſipation*, the moſt part of the nobility and gentry of this iſland carry their families to *London*, where ſervants conſtantly entertain each other, with accounts of *profitable places*; as how much wages ſome have more than others. They ſeldom conſider ſo much their *comfort* and *peace*, the *ſafety* of their *morals*, and the *good treatment* they find, as how much they may get; I ſay *may* get, for it is not the lot of one in a thouſand to be in ſuch ſervices as are repreſented to them; nor perhaps to have abilities to keep ſuch places, if they could *get them*. They are apt to judge of the beſt places, as people do of the greateſt prize in a lottery; and in hunting after an imaginary good, often plunge themſelves into a real

evil.

evil. Let me adviſe you to be *contented*, and learn when you are *well*, and not deſire to be *better than well*.

M. I have heard that the more ſome ſervants gain, the worſe lives they lead.

T. This may happen with ſuch as ſerve people who ſhew a bad example. I will tell you my thoughts, with condition that you *keep them to yourſelf!* Nothing contributed more to injure the *morals* and *contentment* of ſervants, and the peace and freedom of families, than the *cuſtom of* VAILS-GIVING.

M. How was this cuſtom introduced?

T. I ſuppoſe it is ancient, ſo far as it might relate to certain great men, on great occaſions;—but our folly at length made it general, inſomuch that we *all* acted as if we were *great*; and it became a tax without diſtinction, on thoſe who had *generoſity* without *wealth*, or *wealth* without *generoſity*, as well as on thoſe who had neither. This created a ſtrange jumble!—The affections in the human ſoul, are the ſame in *prince* and *beggar*: the *generous* feel the pleaſure of beſtowing where they think the object deſerving; and the greater the diſtreſs, the greater the joy to him who relieves it; but to be *conſtrained*, by the tyranny of a cuſtom, *to give*, is a contradiction.

M. When you came into life, what was a footman's wages?

T. I had only five pounds; but I uſed to receive three or four more, in ſhillings, from my maſter's friends: however, I always thought a *crown at Chriſtmas*, beſtowed with an air of generoſity, by a gentleman whoſe face I had often ſeen, more valuable than ten ſhillings given in ſhillings, as if I were a *beggar* at my maſter's door; or his friends obliged by the power of this inhoſpitable practice, to *pay me* for doing my duty to my maſter; or ſatisfy *me* for the dinner they had eaten at his expence, generally paying more than it was fairly worth.

M. It had been better for you, and, with reſpect to what your maſter preſented to other gentlemen's ſervants, *for himſelf alſo*, if he had given you eight or ten pounds a year wages, without *giving* or *taking* vails.

T. I know that nothing hath wounded the reſpect we owe our ſuperiors, or done greater prejudice to the ſobriety and fidelity of ſervants, particularly footmen, than this *beggarly cuſtom*, the breach of which now honours both maſter and ſervant, more than the obſervance of it ever did.

M. It was a *cuſtom* which, I ſuppoſe, beggared ſome poor gentlemen, who might give occaſionally more money than remained in their pockets.

T. So it hath often happened; but this was not the only inconvenience. The *ſervant* did not depend on the *maſter* alone; and therefore he could not depend on his ſervant: their mutual wants are now better anſwered, and the rate of wages more properly aſcertained. The ſervant now knoweth *what* he hath to expect, and *from whom*; and his fidelity is ſecured the better, whilſt the maſter becomes the wiſer, by being ſo much the better able to regulate his expence. I have often heard *my good maſter* ſay, that in foreign countries, we are conſidered as a nation of *princes*, *philoſophers*, and *freemen*: but that this cuſtom of *bribing ſervants* to do their duty, had converted the firſt nobles of the land, into arbitrary levyers of taxes on their gueſts, for the benefit of their ſervants, ſtaining their dignity and nobility by an action mean and ſervile; equally eſtranged from freedom, generoſity, and common-ſenſe.

M. Is there any ſuch cuſtom yet remaining amongſt us?

T. Yes: the cuſtom of *card-money yet remains*, and is of the ſame kind: I have often wondered why the *viſitor* did not pay for the *tea*, the *ſugar*, the *fire*, the *candles*, or the *room*, as well as for the *cards*: theſe are objects of *comfort*, as well as entertainment, and therefore the moſt valuable.

M. Do the gentry put themſelves upon a level with *publicans*, that they make their gueſts pay for the cards?

T. Why, in truth, it is *like* it: there are ſome few who actually live *by* gaming-tables, as there are others who attend them ſo much, they may be ſaid to live *at* them.

M. But pray, how ſtand the advantages which women ſervants claim? Have they not as good a title as the men?

T. In ſome reſpects a better; though they had need be more on their guard, of whom, and for what they receive money. They have not only the ſmalleſt wages, but if they marry,

marry, they have oftentimes the largeſt ſhare of the burthen in the care of their offspring; for the father often leaves them; or being pinched by want, *deſerts* them. Another reaſon is, that being the moſt temperate, to *one old man* found in a work-houſe, there are generally *five old women*, having buried their huſbands, who left them *pennyleſs*. By the time the men grow old, they generally die, or are provided for; but there are many women reduced to want, with a family of young children at their heels, who are often obliged to apply to the pariſh. In our condition, you know, that no proviſion being made for a wife or children, at marriage, there is generally the moſt prudence required on the female ſide: and this alſo pleads for the women ſervants to reap the fruits of generoſity, at leaſt as much as the men.

M. And how ſtands wages, in general, at this time?

T. Theſe, like other articles, are proportioned to the price of the neceſſaries of life: I am ſure that I pay a great deal more for reaping an acre of corn, than I did formerly; and I believe the ſame is in practice with regard to wages of domeſtics; for although the man ſervant is fed, as well as clothed in the family where he lives; yet, perhaps he is called upon to feed his wife, his aged parent, or his child; and his humanity may alſo induce him to aſſiſt ſome poor relation. He may likewiſe hope to feed himſelf, and enjoy the fruits of his honeſt induſtry. If he goes to the workhouſe in his old age, it is an uncomfortable ending of honeſt ſervice; and the maſter muſt, in conſequence of ſuch an event, be the more heavily taxed from generation to generation, for the *parochial poor*. He may, therefore, wiſh to ſee his ſervants more provident, and ſave their wages more than they uſually do. There is not a ſtronger proof how thoughtleſs we are grown, than from the ſmall number of domeſtics who appear to *ſave any thing*. This is one reaſon why our hoſpitals are crouded, and ſo many end their days in a poor-houſe. "Rolling ſtones gather no moſs;" therefore let me entreat you, that if you find good treatment, you will conſider it as ſuperior to any ſuch additional wages, as you might have the fortune to obtain, upon change of place. In your preſent ſituation, as a very young woman, a fondneſs for change can hardly fail to produce

miſchief. I do not ſay, but that in due time you may naturally expect an *increaſe of wages*, yet obſerve my council: prefer a peaceful life, with moderate wages, to the greateſt advantages, attended with irregularity. And remember that I now part with you, my dear child, in the confidence that you are going into *good hands*: every one of our neighbours has not been ſo fortunate at ſetting out!

M. I hope to do well; but pray, what is my MISTRESS's general CHARACTER and conduct?

T. A conduct truly rational and religious is ſo *rare*, it always makes thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed, appear *ſingular*. This lady is called a *particular woman*: ſhe hath ſo much religion, as not to be ſatisfied without prayers in her family every morning and night, ſeeming as if ſhe counted the days and nights ſhe lives, and in a ſtrict ſenſe applied her heart unto *wiſdom*. Upon the ſame principle, ſhe requires of all her ſervants to go to church, either in the morning or evening every ſabbath-day; and will not keep a ſervant who declines going to the *ſacrament* of the Lord's-ſupper, at the great feſtivals.—She requires of them to repreſent to her, if any hindrance ſhould intervene, that, if poſſible, ſhe may remove it; thinking herſelf equally anſwerable for the religious duties, as well as the morals of her ſervants; having found, as ſhe ſays, by experience, that theſe generally accompany each other; and that the more ſervants there are, the more difficult it is to govern them properly.

M. Does ſhe bargain with them that they ſhall receive the ſacrament?

T. No: this would be abſurd; but if repeated admonitions, and the moſt pious and friendly advice, when they *are* in her ſervice, make no impreſſion, ſhe diſcharges them; not caring to confide in the obedience of thoſe, who do not obey their Saviour; nor to truſt ſuch as act as if they had no truſt in the word of God.

M. In my conſcience I believe, if all maſters and miſtreſſes were to act in the ſame manner, we ſhould be much the better for it.

T. Religion, like the beſt and the worſt things, depends on habit; I mean the diſcharge of the duties of it. The moſt abandoned

abandoned wretches might occaſionally be induced to practiſe deceit; but the *hypocrite*, who lets *cunning waters* fall from his eyes, hoping to make them ſhew as ſtreams of innocence, muſt anſwer for it at the tribunal of that God, in whom is no deceit, nor turning from the truth;—But in reſpect to the people, the hypocrite is leſs dangerous, than him whoſe example defies the laws of heaven and earth!

M. Is ſhe an induſtrious lady?

T. She is never idle; and to keep her ſervants *virtuous*, ſhe eſteems it neceſſary to keep them *employed*, giving them this wholeſome proverbial admonition; "get thy *ſpindle* and thy *diſtaff* ready, and God will ſend thee flax;" telling them to *think* of *eaſe*, if ſo they are pleaſed, but to work on; obſerving that eaſe is the object which all mankind are naturally inclined to ſeek; but that they really find more pleaſure in action than in reſt.

M. What! to be always at work!

T. Humane and conſiderate people, think of others as they do of themſelves: ſhe is attentive to the means by which her ſervants, at proper times, may be moſt ſafely diverted. In her is found all the tenderneſs of a woman, without the foibles uſually attending your ſex. She is acknowledged to be one of the politeſt women of the age, charming in her perſon, and in manners moſt attractive: in underſtanding ſhe is ſuperior to moſt *men*: very affable and courteous, yet ſupporting her dignity with grace. Her charity flows from her religion; and as it is cheriſhed by the *compaſſion* which ſtreams from her heart, ſhe is therefore conſtant and ſteady. She judges on the *merciful ſide*, diſtinguiſhing *faults* from *crimes*; and conſiders the condition ſervants are in, as well as the kind of education they have had.

M. You make me in love with my miſtreſs!—I ſuppoſe that all her ſervants love and honour her, with all their hearts.

T. They have great reaſon to do ſo: but this is not the age of good ſenſe and piety, in the œconomy of domeſtic life.—She will not chide you often; for ſhe ſays, frequent chiding deſtroys authority. If ſervants will not mend upon reaſonable admonition, ſhe thinks there is no good to be expected from them. Her reproaches are full of gentleneſs; and her

advice

advice the law of kindneſs: but you are to obſerve, that ſhe will not recommend the ſervants ſhe diſcharges, if they have behaved untowardly; nor conceal their defects in point of civility, ſobriety, or cleanlineſs; yet, rather *compaſſionating* than *aggravating* ſuch faults. She ſays, that deceit in recommending ſervants, from motives of compaſſion to *them*, is like robbing the *rich*, in order to give alms to the *poor*.

M. Indeed, I believe that falſe tenderneſs deſtroys the diſtinction of good and bad ſervants, and diſcourageth the virtuous.—Some think, that becauſe they are in a lower ſtate than the maſter, therefore he muſt make it up to them by his good word, let their conduct be what it may.

T. She diſdains this opinion. You have heard of a late ſtory of a gentleman, who notwithſtanding he knew his ſervant had robbed him, recommended him to another maſter. The conſequence of which was, that he robbed the ſecond maſter alſo: but he proſecuted the gentleman, and recovered the loſs. Mutual confidence, like laws, ſhould be founded on *truth* and *juſtice*.

M. True, my father: neither of theſe ſhould be offended, for the ſake of maſter or ſervant.

T. To offend God under a notion of compaſſion, can never be true religion. If due care was taken, no good maſter would have a bad ſervant.

M. Pray, doth this lady examine into her houſhold affairs?

T. Diſcreet women, they ſay, have neither *eyes* nor *ears*. They are occaſionally *blind* and *deaf*; but they ſhould alſo *ſee* and *hear* in proper time and ſeaſon: there is a *meaſure* in all things: without it, diſcretion itſelf would imply a contradiction. Your miſtreſs is ſo exact, ſhe makes up her accounts every *Monday* morning, paying *ready-money* for every thing ſhe buys. By this means, ſhe lives elegantly and ſplendidly, for *half*, or at moſt *two thirds* the ſum, which thoſe ſpend, who would *never* pay their debts, if they could cut off the long arms of the law. Her maxim is, "better go to bed ſupperleſs, than riſe in debt:" intimating, that many charges are contracted by things not *neceſſary*; and that ſome neceſſary things muſt be given up, rather than run in debt for them.

She lives within her income; not with a view to increaſe her wealth, but to provide for the pleaſure of beſtowing liberally to objects of diſtreſs, diſtinguiſhing acts of charity from acts of liberality; though, in truth, they ſeem to me to be much the ſame thing, excepting the rank of the perſon diſtreſſed. She diſdains the notion of making the better figure at the expence of her peace of mind; whether it be created by expending too much, or by not having it in her power to do generous actions. She ſays, ſhe always endeavoured to promote the good of her family, and obtain the confidence of her huſband, during his life-time, by conſulting how far he choſe to carry his expence, apprehending it of great conſequence to make it fixt and regular, particularly with regard to clothes and pocket-money. I have heard her ſay, that in the beginning of her life, and before ſhe was married, that ſhe made almoſt every thing that ſhe wore: that whilſt ſhe could command a needle, ſhe was never idle; and when ſhe became miſtreſs of a family, ſhe found early riſing, equally conduced to the diſpatch of buſineſs, and the whole pleaſure of the day; apprehending, that to rely entirely upon her ſervants, was equally unjuſt to them who had not been bred up to command; and to herſelf, whoſe education enabled her to direct. She is deſirous that every thing ſhould go on well, by every one doing their duty.

M. All this is right: is ſhe a grand lady?

T. She dreſſes elegantly, according to her fortune, her clothes being rather rich than brilliant; but ſhe confines herſelf to a certain moderate ſum yearly, expending more in *charity* than *apparel*. She is at no charge for *hair-dreſſers*, her daughter or her maid doing all ſhe requires about her perſon.

M. More in charity than in apparel!—I have heard of ſome ladies, who are at a greater expence for curling their hair, than will pay the wages of half a dozen chambermaids.

T. The greater ſhame for them! Your worthy miſtreſs had much rather relieve the diſtreſſed, than put a hair-dreſſer, in point of pay, upon a level with a gentleman. She is not *faſhionably* grand, for ſhe diſlikes *cards*; yet, not ſo, but ſhe will play for an hour, to oblige her friends in a private family. You are to underſtand, that *hair-dreſſing*, *preparation*

for

for cards, and the *card-table*, employ a conſiderable portion of the *time* of our fineſt people; and yet, I have often heard my maſter ſay, there are few women of condition in other countries, ſo rational and knowing, as ours are.

M. Is not this a contradiction?

T. Not if the women of other countries have the ſame faults, and fewer virtues. In ſome parts of *Europe*, I have heard, that religion is more attended to, than it is here. This lady is well read, not in the ſcriptures only, but in all the ableſt and moſt elegant compoſitions of the divines of our Church, and the Diſſenters. She alſo reads hiſtory, and travels, and ſome books of ingenuity; ſeeking the converſation of ſenſible and virtuous perſons of both ſexes.—So far as variety is neceſſary, ſhe changes the ſcene from *books* to *muſic*; and has great pleaſure in *walking*, and in *riding on horſeback*.—She eſteems the works of *nature*, as they come immediately from the hands of God, far ſuperior to all the powers of *art*: and the charms of virtue, as viſible in the beauties of the mind, beyond all parade, or the whiſtling of titles.—She hath a fine taſte in the *ornamental* parts of life, and embroiders beautifully; but this, in compariſon of things really uſeful, ſhe eſteems as unworthy of praiſe.—To do good, is what ſhe conſiders as an employment, as well as a pleaſure; and ſhe never ſeems to be tired.

M. With all theſe high qualities, has ſhe *good-nature*?

T. I think ſhe could hardly have ſuch qualities without it. She appears to have great ſenſibility; and though naturally of a quick temper, ſhe ſpeaks *calmly*, having acquired ſuch a command of her paſſions, that ſhe ſeems to weep or rejoice, only from a juſt ſenſe of things, drawn from thought and experience.—She has ſeen and felt what it is to be unfortunate, and ſays, that "no one knows better what *good* is, than he who hath endured *evil*."—In a word, the conſciouſneſs that ſhe ought to paſs her time on earth, agreeable to the deſign of Heaven, gives a peculiar chearfulneſs and ſweetneſs to her manners.—She often ſays, that people of chearful diſpoſitions, are ſeldom agitated by any violence of paſſion; and that an even, chearful ſpirit, is the beſt preſervative of the mind from every dangerous effect of the paſſions.

M. Does

M. Does the conſideration of the *times*, ever put her out of humour?

T. Times!—Do *you* expect better times, *Mary?* They are as good as we pleaſe they ſhall be. We are inconſtant, and ignorant of our own happineſs, and expect too much. As a woman of fortune, ſhe is intereſted in the ſafety of property: as a good and loyal ſubject, ſhe attends to her duty.—She acknowledges the diſtinguiſhed good ſenſe and virtue which is to be found amongſt ſome of us beyond any other nation: but laments our *national character*, expreſſed in our *inclination to be diſpleaſed*, or to talk at random, as if we were diſpleaſed, whether we are really ſo or not; making it doubtful whether the *preſs*, by its *abuſe*, is not converted into an inſtrument of *ſlavery:* ſhe means the ſlavery of one man's deſtroying the good name of another; for when this ceaſes to be the moſt *ſacred property*, all *confidence* muſt ceaſe.—She conſiders the *peace of a nation*, like *religion*, too ſacred to be brought on the theatre of *public amuſement*, apprehending that liberty may grow angry, and take her leave: for whilſt ſo many pens are ſo grievouſly envenomed, they can hardly fail of *poiſoning* the minds of the people, who read the news-papers, as many are fools enough to believe every thing that is *printed.* She ſays, that candour and humanity, are the chief glory of a free nation; and conſequently, that writers who ranſack all the receſſes of intelligence, to *find* faults, or to *make* them, torturing every word and action, to wreſt them to a meaning deſtructive of peace, may render *liberty* aſhamed of owning *us* as her children; adding, that if authority is vilified and diſcredited, it will have a hard ſtruggle to maintain its weight to anſwer the ends of government. She obſerves alſo, that if the prudence and virtue found in government, are not rightly diſtinguiſhed from the *abuſes* which have crept into it, and proper time given to correct them, the candid part of the people, which ſhe charitably ſuppoſes is the greateſt, will find themſelves bewildered, whilſt the fooliſh or diſhoneſt make it a reaſon to ſubvert all government.

M. What do *you* think of theſe matters?

T. Why, *Mary*, are *you* too become a politician?

M. I am glad when I can promote peace and good humour.

T. It cannot be denied, that corruption and abuſes have crept into government; but government hath been often oppoſed with virulence and animoſity, as if any body could govern better than thoſe who are in office: but you know ſomebody muſt be in office; and if they are always abuſed, it is hard to judge, in many caſes, who is in the wrong; but it is our buſineſs to hope that *good* will come out of *evil*; for if, as they ſay, riches are the cauſe of the corruption of our manners, it may eaſily happen, that we ſhall become poorer; and we may perhaps diſcover, that more virtue, and leſs wealth, will make us a happier people, than more wealth, and leſs virtue.—Contrary to the common practice, your miſtreſs thinks it her duty to examine *firſt*, and pronounce her opinion *afterwards*, which ſhe always does with diffidence, declaring that ſhe had rather ſubmit to a *ſmall evil*, than hazard a *greater*. She has an awful regard to *juſtice*, as due to all mankind, whether a perſon *in* office or *out*, diſdaining the thought of condemning *miniſters* of ſtate, or any others, *unheard*, or as fancy dictates; for, ſays ſhe, how can I be a miſtreſs of the ſubject? and to ſuppoſe they muſt be bad men, who are charged with the weighty affairs of government, as it were becauſe they have this charge, is monſtrouſly abſurd and cruel; and to abuſe them wantonly is wicked. Such conduct appears to her as ſetting ourſelves afloat in a ſtorm, without ſail or compaſs.——In ſhort, her politics keeps pace with her good ſenſe and *charity*, and both incline her to lament the *errors* of ſome, and the *perverſeneſs* of others, whilſt her *benevolence* wins the hearts of all.

M. This is not the way of talking at the doors of alehouſes, nor among goſſips: I hear many ſpeak of *ruin* as familiarly as they do of eating their dinner.

T. At alehouſe-doors! No, *Mary*, nor within many other doors;—but this is more according to the humour of the day, than a conſtant practice:—yet it ſeems to be a heavy tax on our morals, as well as our intereſt. It is childiſh; it is trifling with ſerious things: I ſee no good coming of it; for either miniſters are not in fault, as they ſay, or we never puniſh them, and conſequently we do not act upon a right principle. If ruin ſhould, at any time, be near

near us, as we only *talk* of it; we ſhall be like the boy in the fable, crying, *The wolf! the wolf!* till he comes at laſt, and devours us. The only good that can happen, is, that the ambition of one great man keeps another's pride in awe.

M. What do you underſtand by *great man?*

T. Not always him whoſe mind is great and exalted, but a perſon of large fortune, or diſtinguiſhed talents; and ſometimes it means a man who has the curſe of being able to do miſchief.—This lady is as temperate in her manner of living, as in her politics: ſhe never has but one courſe, and eats very light ſuppers. She is remarkable for keeping *good hours*, paying for none of her amuſements more than they are worth. She thinks temperance will preſerve her *life*; but ſhe often talks of *death*, as the *end* of her cares; and wonders to ſee ſuch a buſtle among people about life, ſpeaking of her own diſſolution, which ſhe always ſuppoſes to be near, in ſo familiar and unaffected a manner, that no one can doubt of her being perfectly reconciled to the decrees of heaven.

M. Happy lady! Would to God I could imitate her, in that which is a common duty to us all!

T. Whatever our *fortunes* may be, we might all cultivate the ſame ſentiments, and by degrees acquire *the ſame happy turn of mind.* I hope, ſo far as the duties which I have deſcribed are common to Chriſtians; or any of the good cuſtoms and habits which I have mentioned, are ſuited to your humble condition, you will imitate your miſtreſs. Act your part well, and you will equal her in virtue. As to fortune, if it ſmiles upon you, take the advantage; but when you are diſappointed in your views, ſuppoſe that you are not leſs under the care of Providence, as that which hath happened, may be the beſt for you!

M. I will endeavour to be very faithful; and I make no doubt but that I ſhall love and honour my miſtreſs: at the ſame time, I have experienced ſo much tenderneſs at home, I am afraid that all the regard which I can expect, will appear harſh to me.

T. Fear, beyond the meaſure that prompts us to provide the beſt we can for our ſecurity, ſerves only as a ſcourge: rather indulge a ſuſpicion, that an exceſs of kindneſs may make

you proud, and draw you into ſome ſnare. Do not expect too much: *bleſſed* are thoſe who do not raiſe their expectations above meaſure, for they ſhall not be diſappointed, nor rendered wretched, from their miſtaken notions of the world. ——Above all, I charge you, let nothing tempt you to be ungrateful. Your miſtreſs will probably ſay to you, "I know your father to be an honeſt man; I have a reſpect for him; and if you are a true *daughter of his*, you will be a faithful and *good ſervant to me*: and if your conduct ſheweth it, you may be aſſured of my friendſhip."

M. If I ſet out with ſuch a prepoſſeſſion in my favour, it will be a happy ſign of my ſucceſs.

T. The world, *Mary*, goes not always as it ſhould; otherwiſe what can be nearer to any of us, than a *good ſervant*, except a relation, or a friend we have long proved. A *good ſervant* is a *bleſſing*, and a *bad child* a *curſe!* But in all circumſtances, gratitude for kindneſſes received, is one of the beſt proofs of virtue. Thoſe who expect their ſervants to be their friends, ſhould firſt ſhew themſelves friendly: but the maſter will not always ſucceed, let his conduct be ever ſo virtuous and humane; for *ingratitude* is a weed which grows in many ſoils, and we may expect the moſt of it where the ground is leaſt cultivated: this is often verified among people of our condition. Although ingratitude is not a crime puniſhable by human laws, it is ſuch a proof of baſeneſs, as cannot eſcape puniſhment hereafter. You know not how many pine in ſecret anguiſh, for the unkindneſs of thoſe who were bound in gratitude to be their comforters.

M. Solomon ſays, "Whoſo rewardeth *evil* for *good*, evil ſhall not depart from his houſe."

T. We are all prone to evil; but among the virtuous, "he that *receives* a good turn, never forgets it; and he who *does* one, doth not *remember* it." Never be ungrateful to any one, but particularly to her who gives you bread and protection; for though you will repay by your labour, the vicious, in every part of life, diſregard their duty ſo much, that the *virtuous* cannot be too much praiſed, when they perform it. The ſatisfaction which ever waits on conſcious integrity, is the higheſt pleaſure that mortals can enjoy.

M. I

M. I am not apprehenſive I ſhall be guilty of ſo grievous a ſin; and for the reſt, I am prepared to meet diſappointments and misfortunes, and begin to feel what they are, in parting with you: yet, I believe that *cuſtom* makes all places familiar; and I truſt that the ſame good Providence, which has hitherto preſerved me, will always defend and protect me.

T. Remember that NEGLIGENCE is but another name for unfaithfulneſs or diſobedience, againſt which you ought to pray (*a*). The beſt-minded people ſometimes *forget*; and thoſe maſters who underſtand what human nature is, make ſuitable allowances for it.

M. Allowance muſt be made! but I apprehend that negligence ariſes chiefly from lazineſs: and ſhe who intends to do any thing, and puts it off to a diſtant hour, will probably forget it.—How often do you think this may be *forgiven?* ſeventy times ſeven?

T. This is not of the kind of tranſgreſſion which can be entitled to ſo much excuſe: *forgiveneſs* is another conſideration, which relates more to religion. Not doing a thing at the time we think of it, knowing it muſt be done within a certain time, is hazarding the doing it at any time. The putting off till to-morrow, or ſome diſtant hour, grows into a habit, till at length the whole life of ſuch a ſervant is out of order: it is a continued ſcene of erring and repenting, or growing obſtinate and impenitent: all the peace and harmony of life is ſubject to be deſtroyed. Her buſineſs is never done, or done imperfectly, becauſe out of time. She doth not as ſhe would be done by; or ſhe is a fool, and would ſuffer evils which render

(*a*) *For Fidelity in Servitude.*

Great God! thou righteous judge of men! let thy fear be always before mine eyes, that I may diſcharge my duty with faithfulneſs and zeal. Thy all-piercing eye, can ſee my inmoſt thoughts, and minuteſt actions! Let my fidelity to my miſtreſs expreſs my gratitude, for all the mercies which thou haſt vouchſafed unto me, that I may delight in promoting her happineſs and proſperity: and I beſeech thee, to give *her* ſuch a ſenſe of her eternal obligations to juſtice and piety, temperance and righteouſneſs, that her endeavours may unite with mine in the advancement of thy glory, and the good of mankind. This I beg, O merciful Father, through the merits of *Jeſus Chriſt* my Redeemer. Amen.

render her unworthy or incapable of being a miſtreſs. Your buſineſs is to pray for patience in ſervitude; and you may as well pray, that your conduct may not juſtly excite indignation and reſentment (*a*).

M. Is it not negligence which at length puts ſervants upon lying, and conſulting how they ſhall deceive, as knowing their conduct will not ſtand the teſt?

T. Juſt ſo: I have obſerved it a thouſand times. I have likewiſe ſeen bad ſervants give occaſion for that kind of petulancy and imperiouſneſs, of which all ſervants are apt to complain. Thus is life diſturbed on both ſides: and hence it happens, that many maſters and miſtreſſes, otherwiſe good people, are careleſs of the morals and religious deportment of their ſervants. They grow tired, and care not for more, than ſimply regards domeſtic duties, and theſe oftentimes imperfectly performed. Thus things are linked together as in a chain: it is the nature of *vice*, of every kind, to create diſquiet in the human breaſt; and it is rare for a family to enjoy peace and comfort, without *ſome occaſional* diſturbances.

M. This is a ſad account!

T. Do not fear: you muſt expect to find virtue and vice blended together!—The world is a wide field; in many parts of it grow briers and thorns, whilſt others abound in fruits and herbs of every kind, which can feed or delight us. The body requires not much food, nor need it be of the richeſt kind to keep it in health. Nor will you find the improvement of your mind ariſes from nothing but peace and harmony: bitters, as well as ſweets, conſtitute the nouriſhment of the ſoul in virtue. Have you not obſerved, that *to-morrow* often wears out the evils of to-day? We are happy by

(*a*) Moſt merciful God, and tender Father! I beſeech thee to remove from me all pride and haughtineſs of ſpirit, that with patience and reſolution, and ſingleneſs of heart, I may ſubdne evil with good. Grant me grace to imitate the humility of my bleſſed Saviour, that I may obtain ſuch peace of mind, and reſt of ſoul, as the world cannot give. Let my conſcience be void of offence, that amidſt all the follies and iniquities which ſurround me, I may acquit myſelf with applauſe in thy ſight, O God, and receive the reward which thou haſt promiſed to thy faithful ſervants, through *Jeſus Chriſt* my Redeemer.

by intervals. Some evils are rendered familiar by cuſtom: others ſupplanted by virtue, or by *greater evils*. The mind not diſeaſed by *pride*, nor *repugnant* to the decrees of Heaven, often draws conſolation from diſtreſs. Hope for the beſt, and pray for patience. When evils come, which you think you can remedy, remove them as your better judgment may direct: but make not the remedy the greater evil.

M. I ſhall bear with patience, as much as my prudence may teach me I ought to bear, being perſuaded from what you ſay, there is an inevitable mixture of *evil* with *good*.—If I am treated *well*, I hope I ſhall be ſenſible of it: if *ill*, I will ſtill endeavour to keep my good humour, fidelity, and generoſity of temper, not for my reputation only, but for the ſake of virtue: but I will leave my place, rather than be a *ſlave*.

T. Well diſtinguiſhed! But do not change without acquainting me, unleſs you find your perſon in danger. I hope you will have no reaſon to think yourſelf a ſlave. Be juſt to yourſelf, and do your duty, and not engage to do what you cannot perform. You will probably find ſome ſervants ſo perverſe, or cunning, as never to acknowledge themſelves to be in the wrong: however falſe or ridiculous the excuſe, ſomething is always ready at their tongues end: not having ſenſe enough to diſcover that every one is occaſionally miſtaken or forgetful of her duty, and that thoſe generally err the leaſt, who are the moſt candid in their acknowledgments of error, they untowardly perſiſt, as if they had not the leaſt notion of candour.

M. Is not this a very ſingular character? Which is the moſt unhappy, the miſtreſs or the ſervant? If one is diſcontented, and the other diſpleaſed, why do they not try to mend their fortune?

T. It is not eaſy to account for the conduct of many people in the world: they know not their own minds. The condition of the maſter, as appointed by Providence, entitles him to a ſuperiority; but he had better renounce it, and ſerve himſelf, than be harraſſed or inſulted: for, ſo far from doing any good, he only contributes to eſtabliſh the perverſeneſs of another perſon.

M. Is

M. Is not the conſideration of the low education of ſome domeſtics, a reaſon for compaſſionating their infirmities?

T. With ſome few people it is; but would you have them excuſe ill-mannered, or pert replies, trifling evaſions, frivolous excuſes, or obſtinate lies?

M. I do not mean this: I ſhould not excuſe them often were I miſtreſs.

T. I have frequently ſtood amazed at the patience, or rather folly of ſome maſters, when I have heard ſervants anſwer to reaſonable and neceſſary commands, *Yes, if I have time*; or, *I will do it, when I have time:* and this in a tone of voice, which ſeemed to ſignify in plain *Engliſh*, "*I have certain duties to perform. You, Sir, do not underſtand what you ſay. I am the beſt judge whether it ought to be done or not; and if I find it neceſſary, or it pleaſes me to do it, it ſhall be done when I think proper.*"

M. Is not this conſtruction of their words, ſevere? Such a reply would ſeem to be a proof, that a ſervant hath loſt all ſenſe of the reſpect due to a maſter or miſtreſs.

T. Maſter and ſervant are often fools alike: they neither *part*, nor *remain together*. Mutual civility conſtitutes a great portion of the joys of domeſtic life, among the beſt kind of people: and candour, with reſpect to what is or is not pleaſing; what is remediable, or not, can alone produce a right underſtanding, and probably a mutual regard between maſter and ſervant. All the reſt is mutual neceſſity, or a preſumption that every maſter and ſervant is ſo bad, that it is in vain to attempt any reformation: whereas it is the *buſineſs* of life to correct and improve each other.——What think you of a girl, who, when her miſtreſs reminded her of what ſhe had forgotten, conſtantly replied, "*I was juſt going to do it?*" Now, whether this was true or not, it was moſt unlucky that ſhe ſhould ſo repeatedly, be *only juſt going to do it*: I adviſe you always to do the thing you are told; and if you reply, thank your miſtreſs, and not ſay, *I was juſt going to do it*; for this will not only rob her of the merit of ſuggeſting the thing that is right, but it will deprive her of the ſilent applauſe which at the leaſt is her due: beſides, though what you ſay ſhould be *true*, it will appear very much like a *lie*; and that you was *not* juſt about to do it. Always

ſuppoſe that your miſtreſs ſees *your* heart; and that you cannot deceive her's; and let no part of your conduct carry with it an appearance, that pride has greater ſhare in your declaration, than the alertneſs you aſſume. You may put your head under your own wings, and think that nobody ſees you; but reſt aſſured, that thoſe who depend on your ſervice, will diſcover your faults; and in proportion to their ſuperior ſenſe and experience, they will feel the inconvenience which attends them, both in their domeſtic œconomy, and their moral ſenſe of *good* and *evil*. It therefore becomes your intereſt, as well as duty, with regard to both worlds, to pray for candour and obedience (*b*).

M. Do People reaſon ſo much about ſervants?

T. They *talk* much, though they *reaſon* but little. Few maſters or ſervants really ſtudy what *duty* means, but act more from cuſtom and chance, than ſound policy or religion. They both feel the bad effects of miſconduct; and both go on complaining, yet ſeldom trace the evil to its ſource. My maſter, who was very partial to *England*, uſed often to ſay, that he met with fewer mortifications from his ſervants when he lived abroad; not from their ſuperior abilities, but their greater readineſs and obedience. The *Engliſh*, ſays he, do very well in moſt caſes, but they will do it in their own way: their manners partake of their liberty, and they do not conſult how to make their liberty pleaſing. Few of them are ſo fearful of offending, or ſo ſolicitous to oblige, as to render their ſervice agreeable to the natural benevolence of the mind. Hence it ariſes, that neither their own lives, nor their maſters, paſs ſo happily as they might do. The pride of liberty, and the fears of oppreſſion on the ſide of

(*b*) O almighty Lord, and heavenly Father, who delighteſt in the obedience of thy children, I beſeech thee give me an humble, meek, and contrite ſpirit. Inſpire my heart with an utter abhorrence of deceit and cunning. Let no falſhood or evaſion betray my ſoul, that I may dare to confeſs the truth, to thoſe who have a right to require it. Make me patient under reproof, and diligent in performing my duty. Let my gratitude and ſubmiſſion, be accepted as obedience to thee, my Father and my God! Grant this, I beeſech thee, O Lord, for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake. Amen.

the indigent ſervant; and, on the part of the maſter, the inſolence and impatience, with which riches are apt to ſwell the breaſt, often create a kind of miſery, peculiar to freedom not rightly underſtood.

M. Doth the evil prevail more at this time, than formerly?

T. If we may judge from what we ſee, the temper of the people changes: no nation is governed ſo much by faſhion, as this: and liberty hath been ſo much banded about of late, that ſome have acted as if the word would feed and clothe them: no ſervant avows this: the abſurdity would be too glaring! *High liberty men* ſeldom live ſo happily as others, for they forget one material circumſtance; which is, that their maſters alſo are free, and often *take the liberty* to diſcharge them, not for being *free*, but for uſing their freedom as a cloak of negligence and inſolence. Thoſe who forfeit the cordial eſteem and ſatisfaction they might enjoy in mutual good offices, and the friendſhip which theſe would naturally inſpire, muſt ſuffer in the iſſue. I ſay *friendſhip*, for if each ſtrove to make the other happy, they would be friends in the beſt ſenſe. There could be no appearance of tyranny on the part of the maſter, or inſolence on the ſide of the ſervant. They would diſcharge their reſpective duties with pleaſure, and both enjoy the *true ſweets of liberty*. What is menial ſervice, but a ſolemn contract for mutual benefit, each party underſtanding what the other requires? The diſcharge of this obligation, with candour and juſtice, would create mutual kindneſs and regard, and produce happineſs.

M. You ſay that ſome maſters and miſtreſſes have an inclination to tyrannize over their poor ſervants.

T. It may be preſumed, that ſome maſters are fierce and paſſionate, as ſome ſervants are *inſolent* and *diſobedient*: but this proves nothing more, than that there are *bad* people in all conditions; and that the *good* ought to be the more careful and vigilant in the exertion of thoſe ſocial virtues, on which their own happineſs ſo much depends.

M. If they were on both ſides more faithful to their great Maſter and Redeemer, in ſtudying their duty to Him, would they not do it to each other? If the ſervant would do his duty to his maſter, his maſter would be his patron,

and friend. It is ſtrange we ſhould be ſo remiſs, where our happineſs is ſo much concerned. Surely, ſervants are not inſtructed in their duty.

T. Nor do maſters learn *theirs*. If the parent, the maſter, and the miniſter of the pariſh, were to perform their parts, in their reſpective ſtations, we might hope to ſee golden days; but till that happens, we muſt feel the bad effects. If thoſe who abound in leiſure, and ought to be our guides, are notwithſtanding, inattentive to the duties of religion, it is abſurd to ſuppoſe that they will attend to ſuch offices of domeſtic life, as naturally produce happineſs.

M. I believe, that perſons of the leaſt merit, are the worſt ſerved.

T. The reaſon is plain: the worſt examples are generally the moſt imitated; and therefore the evil acts with double force againſt the maſter. How this misfortune is to be remedied, God only knows: that it may be worſe than it is, is apparent to the candid world. I do not mean to give you any impreſſions contrary to truth and reality;—for whilſt we are talking of the evils that happen in families, I muſt tell you, that we have inſtances of great generoſity among ſervants of both ſexes. I remember my honoured maſter once ſpoke of a friend of his, who, through age and decay, was obliged to give up his buſineſs. As a man whoſe benevolence and love for human kind, was not bounded by thoſe rules of prudence which the generality of the world think neceſſary for ſelf-preſervation, he had given ſuch credit to ſome of his acquaintance, who had violated the moſt ſacred ties of confidence between man and man, that he was left in diſtreſs. In this ſituation, he was obliged in his old age, to diſcharge all his domeſtics. Servants are generally acquainted with their maſters circumſtances in life: this gentleman made no ſecret of his: he told them why he paid them off. One of them burſt into tears upon the occaſion, and ſpoke to him in theſe terms: "Sir, I have been your chambermaid ever ſince I was a child, it is now five-and-twenty years: I have always honoured and reſpected you; you have treated me with the kindneſs of a maſter, a father, and a friend. I have ſaved ſome ſcores of pounds in your ſervice, in hopes to make my old age comfortable, that I might neither die for want, nor

depend upon my pariſh for a ſupport; but I can never live in peace, whilſt I think that you are in any kind of diſtreſs. To you, under the good care of Providence, I owe my life: to you I am indebted for much good inſtruction, for the ſafety of my ſoul! I beg that you will accept of my purſe, and all that it contains; it is the bounty of Heaven; and in Heaven I truſt. He that feedeth the ravens, and letteth not a ſparrow fall to the ground unheeded, will not forſake *me!* I have been faithful to him, and to you, my much honoured maſter. I am yet in ſtrength for ſervice; ſuffer me to attend your fortunes, and be your ſervant ſtill!—Perhaps you may not find one ſo faithful and affectionate!"——Why, *Mary*, you weep!—

M. I cannot reſiſt a tear!—Excellent woman! I have heard of men in ſuch circumſtances, doing great actions; but your ſtory does much honour to my ſex. Methinks I could imitate the example: at the ſame time, I am ſenſible how naturally we are prompted by ſelf-love, to worſhip the *riſing*, not the *ſetting-ſun*. Did you hear the name of this perſon?

T. They called her *Theodoſia Hope*. My maſter uſed to mention her very often. She drew tears from her old maſter: he was not too proud to weep at the generoſity of his ſervant, though he bore his misfortunes like a man, knowing that all pleaſure is mixed with pain, and that conſtancy of mind is a more laſting fund of ſolid ſatisfaction, than all the wealth of *India*. *Theodoſia*'s offer was accepted; and ſhe remained in his ſervice. Not long after this, by the death of a relation, his fortune was much mended. He lived not many years: when *he* died, he left her a very comfortable maintenance.

M. How charming are deeds of generoſity!

T. They exalt us above the level of common mortals, and make us think the more of that ſtate, in which virtue conſtitutes perfect happineſs!

M. I think I ſhall never forget this ſtory. The next thing to being as good as *Theodoſia*, is to avoid evil, and be as good as I can.

T. Theodoſia was nobly deſcended: I do not mean that her parents were rich, or poſſeſſed of titles; but the character of her

her mother was the ſubject of great praiſe: ſhe is recorded in ſtory (*a*) as long as marble ſhall endure, in theſe words:

"Let it be remembered,
that there is no ſtation in which induſtry will not obtain power to be liberal; nor any character on which liberality will not confer honour. She had been long prepared, by a ſimple and unaffected piety, for that awful moment, which, however delayed, is univerſally ſure. How few are allowed an equal time of probation! How many, by their lives, preſume upon more!

To perpetuate the memory of this perſon; but yet more to perpetuate the leſſons of her life, this ſtone was erected by voluntary contribution."

You may eaſily imagine, that *Theodoſia*'s zeal in her maſter's ſervice, was attended with no leſs ſkill than activity; and that ſhe was never negligent in her duty. Remember, *Mary*, that NEGLIGENCE, is but a ſmall remove from the actual commiſſion of a crime; for whether we ſuffer by any thing not being done, or by its being done in any manner hurtful to our intereſt, the evil may be equally great, and the fault equally inexcuſable. CARELESSNESS ſometimes means the ſame thing as negligence; but they are eſſentially different; for the errors which proceed from the weakneſs of the head, are not ſo criminal, as thoſe that ariſe from the perverſeneſs of the heart: but in this caſe alſo, the maſter and miſtreſs may ſuffer equally the ſame.

M. I remember the proverb, "That a *careleſs* huſſey maketh many thieves."

T. And can a negligent one promote honeſty? There are many people highly criminal, for throwing temptations in the way of others:—but whatever happens to you, let me charge you not to ſhuffle nor equivocate. The more you are conſcious of neglect, the more humble and candid you ought to be. All vindications of conduct, which relate to facts and common-ſenſe, are aggravations of offences: as all pretences or excuſes

(*a*) This relates to the character of *Elizabeth Monk*, aged 101, as engraved upon a ſtone in *Bromley* churchyard.

excuſes, ſuch as, I thought *this*, and I thought *that*, when in truth you did not think about it, are abominable evaſions, and convert ſlight offences into guilt and falſehood. Next to this, is aſſuming a right to think, what is right to be done, when you are bid to *do* it. Thoſe ſervants who pretend to judge in ſuch caſes, generally determine on the wrong ſide: whereas, if they do as they are bid, except in a few caſes, they cannot offend. Thoſe who have not judgement enough to find out, that *their* proper buſineſs is to *obey*, in that which is the proper buſineſs of the maſter to judge of, are very weak, if not wicked. "I thought, Sir, it would be beſt." The anſwer to this is, "I did not bid you think."—The ſervant means to ſhew a higher kind of merit; but as merit ſeldom ſucceeds without favour, and favour is never gained without obedience, he blunders extremely in his politics. Your ſex is leſs preſumptuous; but girls are alſo apt to be catched by the ear, and to think the laſt advice is the beſt. This expoſes them to the temptation of doing according to their own opinion, or the opinion of thoſe who officiouſly interpoſe as counſellors.

M. Is it poſſible that any can be ſo fooliſhly opinionated?

T. Nothing ſo common. I have found many err in this reſpect.—There is another claſs of offenders, whoſe caſe is more to be pitied; I mean, thoſe whoſe thoughts are ſo diſſipated, that it is not without great difficulty they can attend to what is ſaid to them. You may imagine this is very irkſome to a maſter or miſtreſs; but it is not an incurable infirmity, being rather a defect of the will, and a bad habit, than an abſolute want of power of mind; for if a young woman, for inſtance, has any *delight* in doing her duty, ſhe will ſoon get the better of a *habit*, which muſt otherwiſe render her incapable of ſervice.

M. What do you recommend under ſuch circumſtances?

T. To preſerve yourſelf from this evil, and keep your ATTENTION awake, look at the *perſon who is ſpeaking to you.* The countenance demands reſpect, and helps the underſtanding; and *ſeeing* the motion of another's lips, aſſiſts the *hearing*; whereas the want of this kind of attention, is ill-mannered even among equals, and much more from a ſervant to a

maſter.

maſter. There is another evil, which is, *neglecting the firſt opportunity of* REPORTING THE ANSWER *to meſſages*. There can be no time for doing any thing, but that in which we think of it: there may be reaſons why ſome things are not to be ſaid before any body but the Lady herſelf. The advice which I give you, is to conſider it as a breach of truſt, to keep your miſtreſs in ignorance of what you ought to tell her: it is injuſtice, if you deſignedly omit it. In either caſe you will ſurely offend her.

M. Methinks I ſhould be rather glad of occaſions of ſpeaking to her properly, in hopes to ingratitiate myſelf.

T. It is of great conſequence, in all parts of life, to exerciſe the MEMORY: and, as an encouragement to induſtry, I have conſtantly obſerved, that thoſe who do the moſt buſineſs, have generally the ſtrongeſt memory. Experience muſt teach what confidence to place in yours; but if you confide in it unneceſſarily, you may be ſure it will often betray you.—If you put off to a diſtant hour, That which you can perform immediately, in the preſumption that you ſhall remember it, you will be doubly criminal if you forget. As to That which *ſhould* be done at a diſtant time, commit it to writing.

M. My memory is good; but I do not intend to truſt to it beyond meaſure.

T. Nothing will conduce more to render ſervice agreeable to you, than to keep yourſelf in a GOOD HUMOUR. Pride is a very vexatious paſſion, particularly in ſervitude. If you are diſatisfied with your condition, whatever it may be, the world will wear a gloomy aſpect. It is a doctrine not much attended to, but it is true; that the dignity and glory of human nature conſiſts in *humility*; and it then appears moſt reſpectable, when we conſider the character of the Son of God, who ſo often recommended the humility of a ſervant. Thoſe who ſuffer indignities *gracefully*, are far ſuperior to them who inſult wrongfully: for the wrong which we commit, renders us the more unworthy; whereas the wrongs we ſuffer, make us objects of divine compaſſion.

M. But is it not our duty to *right* ourſelves, when it is in our power?

T. Yes:

T. Yes: but never to do it by *wrong* means. It often happens, that the virtuous, for the very reaſon that they are virtuous, chuſe to ſuffer, as thinking it a leſs evil, than to avenge themſelves. I do not mean, that they court ſuffering, but rather ſuffer wrongfully, than by any vicious or irreligious act, procure to themſelves the ſatisfaction or advantages they might obtain.

M. May I not be too humble, and ſubject myſelf to be trampled on?

T. There is more than a poſſibility of your being ill treated, in a manner it would be folly to bear:—but I muſt beg you to remember, that it is more probable you will err by your pride, which is often the cauſe of ſervants changing places. Impatience under controul, or the hopes of mending their fortune, renders domeſtics more inconſtant than other people generally are. It ſeems to be the nature of their condition. It is a good maxim, in every part of life, to engage with all due caution, and to be ſteady. Some engage at a venture, to do That which the ſmalleſt degree of underſtanding might convince them they are not equal to. And ſome maſters and miſtreſſes expect too much, and are no leſs inconſiſtent. But it oftener happens, that even a good ſervant wiſhes to leave a good maſter, and try to mend her fortune, than the good maſter to part with a good ſervant. I have always felt a particular pleaſure, in ſeeing ſervants grow old under a ſober, regular, and humane maſter.—But of all the creatures of God, a proud ſervant is the ſtrangeſt inconſiſtency. She is perpetually tormenting herſelf, and every one about her, making her life a ſcene of diſtreſs, ſinning and repenting, giving offence by her impatience, and being alarmed with fear leſt the conſequence ſhould be fatal to her. Whilſt young, ſhe is much more expoſed than the humble; for half the wretched beings of your ſex, who live in *London*, on the deplorable wages of iniquity, *for the ſhort time they do live*, have been diſcharged out of ſervice, through *pride* or *petulancy*.—And if they reach to advanced years, they are ſubject to much miſery.

M. Pride, I find, is as dangerous, as it is troubleſome, eſpecially in ſervice, the nature of which requires ſubmiſſion.

SUB-

T. SUBMISSION is a branch of the ſame duty, though it is not properly *a virtue of the mind.* St. *Peter* recommends to us, with the force of a *divine* commandment, "Servants, be ſubject to your maſters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward: for this is thank worthy, if a man, for conſcience towards God, endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye ſhall take it patiently? But if when ye do well and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Is not this agreeable to what I have conſtantly reminded *you*, *Mary?*

M. The advice recommends patience and forbearance to the ſervant; but it doth not authorize any tyrannical or inhuman conduct on the part of the maſter or miſtreſs.

T. No: among Chriſtians, it checks reſentments, and prevents their flaming into rage or revenge; it teaches a ſervant to compaſſionate a miſtreſs's infirmities, and to correct her own: it does not take away the right of leaving a ſervice, nor of appealing to the laws of her country, for any unjuſtifiable conduct. There are many caſes in which it is neceſſary "the knee ſhould bow, though the underſtanding cannot:" and we ſhould conſider calmly what the evil is, and what the *remedy* may be, before we complain. "He that ſhoots at the ſtars, may hurt himſelf, but cannot endanger *them.*"

M. If I mean to give no *diſguſt*, and diligently attend to what is ſaid to me, I hope I ſhall ſoon find where my own *fault*, or the fault of others lies.

T. And where the *remedy* alſo may be found. The evil may be in your own heart; if it be in your miſtreſs's, and too groſs to bear, if your tempers do not ſuit, it is much the beſt way to part calmly.

M. True: but you ſay it is "*better bow, than break.*"

T. My maſter was of a quick temper, and ſometimes ſaid what he might as well not have ſaid: but he was of a humane, friendly, and pious diſpoſition, and generally corrected himſelf. He overlooked many of *my faults*, and therefore I was the more patient under *his*. If your miſtreſs ſhould be of the ſame turn, you may be tempted to think her *impatient*, though ſhe ſhould have occaſion to tell you ten times

a-day of the ſame fault.—I charge you to beware of IMPATIENCE, leſt you ſhould make a pert reply, and at once ſhew yourſelf *ill-mannered* and *ungrateful*, and ruin yourſelf in her favour. Our fortunes, under Providence, depend on our own conduct, and are often made or marred by our good or bad temper. People of bad tempers muſt diſguiſe what they find more difficult to correct. They muſt appear humble when they are really proud, or who will bear with them? If the conſideration of the miſeries they may expoſe themſelves to, do not influence their preſent conduct, they muſt ſtand to the event!—Riches are always temptations, and many evils grow from them, particularly *inſolence* to inferiors: but ſervants who are wiſe, expect ſuch things; and therefore are not ſurprized, nor angry, though they may be *ſorry* when they happen. My advice to you is, that inſtead of reſenting, learn to *compaſſionate* your ſuperiors: they are often objects of compaſſion!

M. Do you mean that I ſhould ſhew *compaſſion* to my *miſtreſs!*

T. In caſe of need: not by exerciſing your tongue, but your heart. No one can be hard-hearted to another, no matter what the rank may be, without firſt diveſting himſelf of humanity. Do not imagine, that compaſſion was made to be employed only by the great and wealthy towards inferiors; the *rich* and *powerful* are frequently greater objects of pity, than thoſe who beg their bread: but he is a fool who diſcovers his opinion, in any offenſive manner, to thoſe on whom he depends for his ſupport. Exerciſe your underſtanding in all things; and by no means *pretend* to be ſo *wiſe* as your miſtreſs. If there ſhould, upon any occaſion, be good reaſon for believing yourſelf in the right, and ſhe in the wrong; yet remember ſhe is your miſtreſs, and that the chance is againſt you, not only from your want of age and experience, but from the lowneſs of your education, or the want of thoſe means of obtaining knowledge, which *ſhe* hath enjoyed. Here *humility* again ſteps in to your aſſiſtance.

M. What occaſion there may be for the exerciſe of *my* compaſſion, I know not; but there is great reaſon for ſuppoſing I ſhall often ſtand in need of *her*'s; and that *her* judgment will not err ſo often as mine.

T. Right;

T. Right: but the ignorant are impatient, becauſe they *are* ignorant.—By all means avoid EXPOSTULATION. It is the fault of ſome ſervants, who have more pride than underſtanding, when they are admoniſhed, to ſay, "*I have ſerved in ſuch and ſuch places, and underſtand my buſineſs.*" However true this may happen to be, they forget that civil language coſts nothing, and that ſuch remarks are uncivil and impertinent, for they are not to the purpoſe: the queſtion is, if they will ſerve, they muſt obey in the manner that ſuits the inclinations of thoſe whom they ſerve, ſtill retaining the liberty of *ſerving*, or *not ſerving*; but they cannot expect the liberty of *commanding*. If they have a mind to try the experiment, it muſt be at the hazard of their place.

M. Are we *never* to juſtify ourſelves?

T. Your innocence will be a juſtification in moſt caſes; and reaſon will generally prevail.—I mean to recommend to you to conſider what you may *loſe*, and how improbable it is you ſhould *gain*, by pert replies, and the gratification of *talking*. No maſter or miſtreſs of ſpirit, will bear to be flatly contradicted by a ſervant, or to *argue* with her about indifferent matters. In caſes wherein your own virtue is not concerned, the pleaſure of your miſtreſs ſhould be your *law*, never forgetting any thing that materially affects her intereſt. If any difficulty ariſes in matters of fact, there is an humble way of aſking leave to acquaint her how the caſe really ſtands. If you are *accuſed of any thing*, as a fault, which you really think to be ſuch, an honeſt generous confeſſion is the ſureſt way to obtain pardon, and do yourſelf *honour*. If you have the cleareſt conviction that you are not in the wrong, yet prudence may call for an acknowledgment, that you are ſorry *for what hath happened:* for if your miſtreſs takes offence, you are ſo far *unfortunate:* by this *means*, an *end* may be put to a *fruitleſs* debate!—If there is any matter in doubt, you may aſk permiſſion to tell the reaſon of your conduct, and leave the deciſion to her. At the ſame time, obſerve attentively the temper ſhe is in, at the time when accidents happen, for trifles ſometimes inflame: and a maſter or miſtreſs, like the world in general, becomes the more angry, if they find their inferiors have more patience, more good humour, or more reaſon on their ſide,

than themſelves.——In all the concerns of life, avoid whatever has the leaſt appearance of DOGGEDNESS. Make ready and direct anſwers to the beſt of your knowledge, looking calmly at the perſon you are ſpeaking to. To *mean* well is one half of the buſineſs, and *patience* the other.

M. This is very reaſonable. I have obſerved, that many people are apt to wander from the queſtion, and ſpeak a great deal, but *ſay nothing* to the purpoſe. You have a high opinion of the lady I am to ſerve: but there is no *certainty* in the characters of us mortals.

T. Nor conſequently in your own.—Remember, my dear *Mary*, that ſome are faulty, becauſe they are *miſtreſſes*; and ſome, becauſe they would be *miſtreſſes*. If you were to reſign your judgment to the guidance of your fellow-ſervants, you might often be tempted to believe, that *they* ought to *ſit* at the head of the table, inſtead of *waiting* at it. If your miſtreſs ſhews herſelf proud, and occaſionally acts with a haughty air, you will be the leſs happy: but you muſt not therefore deſpair of pleaſing her: pride and humility produce the ſame effects, in this reſpect, that the humble are glad to give good advice to their inferiors, and dependants; and the *proud* are flattered, when advice is aſked of them.——Still be honeſt, my girl, though the earth ſhould open wide its tremendous jaws, and ſwallow you. Be neither a flatterer, to wound your miſtreſs in her face; nor a liar, to hurt her behind her back. Make her your friend by the force of her own virtues and underſtanding. Conſider what a wretched ſituation a young woman is in, who has no *true* friend: and who can be ſo properly her friend as her *miſtreſs?*

M. You do not mean, that ſhe will be approached without reſpect, or hear my prattle patiently, on all occaſions.

T. No: but aſk her advice or aſſiſtance, when you really ſtand in need of either. Every one hath a *tender ſide*, ſometimes called a *blind ſide*; but there is a reverence due even to human infirmities, when they are of a *tender kind*. Let not this be a motive for hazarding your probity, by acting the CUNNING *part*, for this is but another word for *deceit*. Nothing is ſo common among ſervants as *cunning*; and nothing more truly contemptible.

M. I

M. I have ſeen this very often, when people flatter with a view to ſome private intereſt.

T. Need I remind you that in the firſt leſſon of the œconomy of life, INDUSTRY ſtands at the head. I remember the remark of the wiſe man, who underſtood life ſo well, ſpeaking of a good ſervant, he ſays, " If thou haſt a ſervant, entreat him as a *brother*, for thou haſt need of him, as of thine own ſoul; and if thou entreat him *evil*, he will run from thee, and which way wilt thou go to ſeek him?" So far regards the common duty of *humanity* and *convenience:* but in order to keep him *virtuous*, and act with prudence, in the ſupport of good order and diſcipline, he ſays, " If thou ſet thy ſervant to *labour*, thou ſhalt find *reſt*; but if thou let him go *idle*, he ſhall ſeek *liberty*. Set him to work, as is *fit* for him: if he be not obedient, put on more *heavy fetters*."

M. What does he mean by *heavy fetters?*

T. That he ſhould be the more confined, *for his own ſake*, as well as his maſter's. Diſobedience and pride naturally produce *idleneſs*, and " idleneſs is the key of beggary." *Induſtry* is the companion of religion, and the guide of virtue; *idleneſs*, the child of vice, and the parent of *miſery*.

M. Do you think *induſtry* is of as much uſe to obtain the goods of this world, as *virtue* to procure eternal happineſs?

T. We ſee daily what mighty things it does, eſpecially when aſſiſted by good abilities, and prudence. *Solomon* ſays, " Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs, he ſhall ſtand before kings, he ſhall not ſtand before common men."

M. This is a very ſtrong expreſſion of the high praiſes of induſtry.

T. It hath ſo peculiar a merit in promoting the *good* of mankind, that whilſt we do our duty to ourſelves, and promote our own fortune, we are performing acts of kindneſs and charity to all the reſt of the world; and accordingly we find, that the induſtrious are treated with reſpect as *friends*, whilſt the idle are conſidered with contempt as *enemies:* theſe eat, and contribute nothing to the common ſtock, either by their *heads* or *hands*, but make others work *for* them; and conſequently act contrary to all juſtice. When they *can* work, and *will* not, bread and water, and a dark room, ſhould be their portion, till they are brought to their ſenſes.

M. Would

M. Would it not be happy, if every one underſtood ſome uſeful trade, that in want of *a place*, or when domeſtics marry, and leave ſervice, they might be enabled to provide for themſelves?

T. This is rather to be wiſhed for than expected: but what a mournful thing it is to behold great numbers of beggars in the ſtreets of great towns, of whom many are ignorant of every art, and do no hard labour, and are therefore expoſed to extreme want and miſery.

M. Very old or very young perſons, not provided for by pariſh laws, are, I preſume, objects of charity.

T. Yes: but if theſe live in beggary, when they can work, be it ever ſo little, they become criminal. Thoſe that receive as charity, either meat, drink, or clothing, being able to get them by the uſe of their hands, rob the *helpleſs*, defraud the *wealthy*, and become a nuiſance to *ſociety*.—You have heard it ſaid, "That the eye of the maſter maketh the ox fat:" therefore never be impatient at ſeeing your miſtreſs *attentive to her own concerns*. Remember this proverb: "If you want your work done, ſend your man; if to be done *well*, go yourſelf." This is a true repreſentation of ſelf-love. The ſervant is often tempted to be negligent; and why? becauſe he loves his eaſe too much. The maſter is attentive in his proper concerns, becauſe he conſults his intereſt. You would not condemn another for acting on the ſame good principle as you act yourſelf. If you are fearful of the diſcovery of any negligence, it is the very reaſon why you may expect to ſee your miſtreſs, where you do not deſire to ſee her.

M. I have heard, that "he is a good divine that follows his own inſtructions." I ſee how candour and good ſenſe are lovely in every ſhape: and if reputation and honour do not always attend on *virtue*, peace at leaſt is in all her paths. O may ſhe live and proſper in my heart!

T. Amen! with all mine: nor fear the ſhafts of envy, nor that your graces will prove your enemies. Hypocriſy is a deadly crime; but if our virtue did not appear in our actions, with reſpect to ſociety, for which we are made, it would be the ſame as if we had it not. Virtue is modeſt, yet not aſhamed of her own ſpirit; nor is the goodneſs which iſſues from her,

of the fearful kind. The more you conſider this, the clearer it will appear to you: for granting that it may be more eaſy to teach an hundred, than be one in an hundred to follow *good advice*, he is not leſs fooliſh who does not follow it.—I gave you an account of one *faithful ſervant*, recorded in the hiſtory of virtue: I dare hope, in ſpite of all the evils we juſtly complain of, that there are many ſuch who glide through life unrecorded.

M. I am glad to hear you ſay this.—I ſhall not forget my dear *Theodoſia*.

T. Never forget her! A faithful ſervant is a jewel of great price, both for uſe and ornament. Carry this in your mind, that as *good maſters and miſtreſſes* generally make ſervants happy, ſo good ſervants not only preſerve the tranquility of families, but frequently are the means of ſaving them from ruin. Let me charge you to be ſtrictly on your guard, to take no advantage, or do any unjuſtifiable action, becauſe you may be able to do it, and not be diſcovered. Fraud in ſuch caſes, is an aggravation of guilt; it is a cruelty added to injuſtice; and a treachery to infidelity. The firſt conſideration of a faithful ſervant, is not to put her maſter or miſtreſs to any unneceſſary expence: although nothing can be a greater temptation to an unfaithful one to be extravagant, than the very reaſon that makes moſt againſt it; namely, the careleſſneſs or ignorance of a maſter or miſtreſs, which renders them ſubject to become a prey.

M. She muſt be curſt indeed, who haſtens her maſter's ruin by ſharing in the plunder of his fortune!

T. So I think: and therefore, if you ſhould become an UPPER SERVANT, and conſequently have a greater truſt repoſed in you, be equally *juſt* and *exact*: "only that which is honeſtly got, is *gain*."—Look upon every penny of your miſtreſs's money to be ſacred; and touch not a farthing for your own uſe, though you ſhould mean to replace it.—Set down what you receive *immediately* on the ſpot; and commit to writing what you are *paying*, even before the money is out of your hand. Do not truſt your memory, as ſome do, leſt you ſhould loſe your money, or charge at random.

M. There

M. There are very few of us who are taught any method with reſpect to ACCOUNTS.

T. Thoſe who are not taught, are the leſs fit for any thing but drudgery. All domeſtic ſervants ſhould write as well as read, and know how to keep accounts of houſehold concerns: it may be eaſily learnt. *Method* ſtands next in rank, to the fairneſs and juſtneſs of accounts: and the more plain and eaſy theſe are to be read and underſtood, the more will you be recommended to greater truſt, and acquit yourſelf with the more honour.

M. As I enjoy the advantage of being able to *write*, and underſtand *addition*, I flatter myſelf with the hopes of performing any duty of this kind, which may be required of me, to the ſatisfaction of my miſtreſs: as to the reſt, though much may depend upon ſkill, I believe more depends upon honeſty. A faithful ſervant certainly ought to rejoice to ſee her maſter and miſtreſs prudent in the management of their fortune, for the very reaſon that ſhe wiſhes to ſee *them* happy, whoſe bread ſhe eats.

T. You talk like a girl of underſtanding, and, what is more glorious, *Mary*, like a *Chriſtian*.

M. Are there many perſons of fortune, who do not examine what they *can* afford to ſpend?

T. Too many!—Others, knowing what their income is, are hurried on by cuſtom and habit to live beyond themſelves; and deſiring to be on a level with thoſe who are their companions, are in perpetual diſtreſs for want of the means. If you knew but half the anxiety which attends the condition of ſome maſters to ſupport a rank, in regard to the maintenance of the number of ſervants they have been uſed to keep, you would be ſo far from envying them, or waſting any thing that can be ſaved, you would become the more zealous from mere *compaſſion*. Many have been diſtreſt, and ſome ruined, by truſting perſons who have neither knowledge, prudence, nor probity ſufficient.

M. Did your maſter truſt *you* with any thing of a SECRET nature?

T. He uſed to boaſt that he had *no ſecrets*. I never found any kind of ſatisfaction in prying into his private concerns, though

though it is impoſſible to be ignorant when a maſter is in great ſorrow, or much joy. His moderation rendered him reſpected; but it expoſed him to impoſitions, when he had any worthleſs ſervants. I have ſeen inſtances of miſchief done out of contempt of authority: for when a bad ſervant thinks it is exerciſed unreaſonably, forgetting that there is One above, who will vindicate the cauſe of truth and juſtice towards the maſter as well as the ſervant, he is too apt to do evil for evil's ſake, or merely from reſentment of his not being liked.

M. This is horrible, when it happens! I hope it is not often!

T. I had almoſt forgotten to mention to you one circumſtance, in which your miſtreſs is particularly inquiſitive: ſhe never likes to take a ſervant who *has no fault*.

M. Not take one who is *faultleſs!*

T. No: ſhe ſuppoſes there is no character without ſome defect: and deſires to know what it is, that ſhe may not be ſurprized, nor wanting in regard to that degree of compaſſion which is due to human infirmities.

M. This is very right: but what will you ſay of me, my father? I am ſure I have faults enough.

T. My dear *Mary*, I ſhall tell her, "That it is more probable you will err on the gentle and compaſſionate ſide, than by being turbulent and hard-hearted: and for the ſame reaſon, you will be too generous, rather than covetous: That I am an old man, and a fond father, and conſequently partial; otherwiſe, it is to be preſumed, that you have your whims and fancies, and perverſeneſs of heart, though I cannot find them out, ſo as to deſcribe them: for if I could, ſhe ſhould know the whole truth. In ſhort, That you are a *woman*, and not an *angel!* That it is now you muſt ſhew what manner of ſpirit you are of: and that a bad one you muſt have, if you are not good under ſo good a lady!" When I ſay this, ſhe will ſmile at my bluntneſs, and probably queſtion me no further.

CONVERSATION V.

T. I Have let you into the moſt part of my ſecrets, in regard to domeſtic life, and the duties of ſervitude: I hope you will profit by them.

M. I mean to follow your inſtructions as occaſions may ſerve, and to think of my obligations to you, with equal conſtancy and gratitude.

T. My maſter more than once told me, that in ſome countries, people of the ſame fortune, keep thrice the number of ſervants, at half the expence that gentlemen live at in *England*. The paſſion for ſhew is not equally ſtrong with us; but if it were, it coſts here ſo much more to gratify it, and therefore is checked. He alſo uſed to remark, that "the more ſervants a man keeps, the more *ſpies* he has on him:" and expreſſed his aſtoniſhment that any perſon ſhould *make* work for many ſervants; or keep them *from work*, in order to make up a *train*; obſerving, that this practice doth not make the ſtate the richer, but the gentleman is the poorer, and the worſe member of ſociety. If the waſte lands were cultivated by ſuch as are uſeleſs ſervants, we ſhould all reap the advantage of greater plenty. The parade of numbers, ſerves to promote grandeur, and diſtribute the riches of the wealthy; but the greater the number of uſeleſs ſervants, the more will vice prevail; and the leſs ſubordination there will be.

M. It is obvious, that the trueſt friend to virtue, is uſeful induſtry. What do you mean by *ſubordination?*

T. You underſtand the meaning, though the word is not familiar to you. I have frequently obſerved, how apt we are to *forget* ourſelves.—Brothers and ſiſters, among the gentry, not being fantaſtical, call each other *John* or *Mary*, with the addition of brother or ſiſter; but ſome ſervants are fond of their SURNAME, and among themſelves they add *maſter* or *miſtreſs*.—This is one ſtep towards confounding diſtinctions,

ſtinctions, and conſequently deſtroying *ſubordination*; by which I mean, ſubmiſſion to good order, with regard to our ſeveral ranks and conditions. What do you think it is that preſerves us *all* in one family, but being ſubject to ſuperiors? Subjection is calculated for the common intereſt of thoſe who are governed, as well as of thoſe that govern. *Servants* muſt be ſubject to *maſters*, or there could be neither maſter nor ſervant: and the happineſs ariſing from this mutual relation, depends on the virtue of both. No ſtart of paſſion, or peculiarity of temper, deſtroys the peace of thoſe that are wiſe. A candid allowance for the frailties of each other being made, neither being intentionally wicked, hardly any thing can happen, but what the force of a moderate degree of underſtanding will ſet it right again, provided a due ſubordination is preſerved. I have heard it remarked, that a churliſh maſter ought to pay double wages, and be glad of any one to ſerve him. There are two ſorts of people, with whom it is not eaſy to live in peace: Thoſe who have ſo many ſervants that they ſtand in each other's way, and in a great meaſure provide for themſelves at random; and the niggardly, who expect too much work, and give too little victuals and wages.

M. Neither of theſe ſhould I like to ſerve.

T. We may imagine what we pleaſe, but the foundation of all *true conduct*, is religion and humanity: theſe naturally introduce a civil behaviour, which adminiſters much to the pleaſure of living. *Civility*, as it conſiſts in words, and little actions, is generally found more among people of lively ſpirits, than with thoſe of a ſerious turn: but leſs of this, with great integrity, is better than more, where the heart is not concerned.

M. I would not *willingly* give pain or offend any one.

T. Then you would be polite and civil: for this is the great rule of all thoſe who mean to paſs for civil perſons. If civility is ſupported by candour and good-ſenſe, it introduces a pleaſing manner of converſation, equally free from hypocriſy and affectation.

M. Much politeneſs, I ſuppoſe, is not expected from people in our condition.

T. No: but when our behaviour is civil and ſubmiſſive, it will always be in eſteem, in proportion to the ſincerity and underſtanding which attends it.

M. What is the difference between the gentleman and the peaſant, ſuppoſing them both equal in good-nature and honeſty?

T. Except the ſuperior knowledge of the gentleman, this conſiſts more in *form* than in ſubſtance; but that very form is called *politeneſs*, and ſometimes *civility*. The kindneſſes which they both do, proceed from the ſame principle; and the pleaſures which they communicate, return back to their own boſoms, in the ſame manner.

M. But ſuppoſing neither of them ſincere?

T. Then the gentleman can *deceive* beſt, by a greater variety of *good words*, and of knowledge in the uſe of them: but what of this? a fool may utter words, perchance, moſt excellently well accented,—and ſtill be a fool:—And what is the gentleman who means not what he ſays? Is he not a mere *farcical* actor? One is contemptible, as a gentleman, for ſaying what he does not mean; the other, as a falſe clown, for not meaning what he ought.

M. Would you have no civility ſhewn without ſincerity?

T. My nature revolts againſt *treachery*, and every thing like treachery!

M. But you will grant, that the concealment of our thoughts muſt be pardonable in ſome caſes.

T. Yes: but this is not comprehended in what is called incivility: it would be often uncivil to diſcover them. The world may agree, that certain words, ſpoken at certain times, ſhall paſs for *nothing*; but this, in the ſight of God, is a proſtitution of the noble gift of ſpeech. Every word ſhould be ſtampt with ſomething good.

M. I fear this will never happen!

T. Perhaps not: but we are ſpeaking of what *ſhould* be. Deceit is practiſed in geſtures and looks: theſe may ſpeak what is underſtood for good-will, when none is meant. Is not this abominable?

M. I ſhall be almoſt afraid of being civil.

T. Not

T. Not if your heart is right; then civility is one of the beſt things in the world. My maſter was a very honeſt man, and yet he uſed to ſay, "If we did not learn thoſe decent phraſes, and ſoft words, which conſtitute a great part of civility, we ſhould be ſo much the worſe, as theſe are a mutual help to keep each other in good humour; adding, that the reſt depends on the heart." Whatever his opinion might be, I am ſure I do not like to profeſs love where I have none. Some ſay, that were it not for the rules of civility, and the imitation of each other, men would be more inclined to a ſavage deportment.—I know not ſo well what they *would be* inclined to, as that they *are* inclined to deceit.

M. Be it ſo, my father: but pray, what is the fault which people of our rank are moſt apt to fall into?

T. A miſtaken notion that incivility is liberty; or being ſo over-civil, as to become ill-mannered.

M. How can *that* be?

T. If I entreat my ſuperior to eat, drink, ſit, or to accept of any kindneſs, and urge it beyond the meaſure of decency and humility, I act as if I would not accept of his refuſal, and conſequently become ill-mannered.—If I am offered a kindneſs, and decline it under a notion of civility, it being proper for me, I am ill-mannered. If I decline it upon a principle of caution, not chuſing to be obliged to a wicked or deſigning perſon, the caſe is altered: I think it no incivility, not to taſte even a diſh of tea, of any man who offers to be my *repreſentative*, if I do not approve of him, for fear his civility ſhould delude me; nor perhaps of him I do approve of, not to ſhew a bad example. I think myſelf obliged to any honeſt, underſtanding gentleman, who will repreſent me; and ſhould rather contribute my mite towards his ſupport, than he to mine. If by virtue of an ancient law, made when people worked for an halfpenny a-day, I am put on a level with the ſquire, who has *three thouſand* times as much freehold as myſelf, I ſhould think I was falſe to my country, and my God, were I to vote for a man, who in my heart I could not recommend.

M. How do our neighbours like this doctrine?

T. They

T. They ſay I am in the *right*; but that right is not the rule of judging now-a-days.

M. No! What *rule* have they, then? the rule of wrong?

T. The rule of convenience. Some fine gentleman or other, is *very civil* to their wives and daughters, and therefore they chuſe him. Curſed is the civility that hurts mens morals! He that acts upon a principle of right, being a Chriſtian, cannot become uncivilized, for *Chriſt* hath taught us the fineſt rules of mutual love and kindneſs, which conſtitute the beſt kind of civility in the world.—It ſeldom happens, that a perſon of a generous mind, is deficient in point of humanity, and conſequently cannot be diſguſtful by incivility; but your very civil people, are not always renowned for generoſity. I have heard it ſaid of one of the emperors of ancient *Rome* (*a*), that he never ſuffered a man to depart with diſcontent out of his preſence.

M. I preſume, he was as civil as he was generous: but if he had lived in theſe days, I fancy he would not have been able to maintain ſuch a reputation.

T. You think that ſuiters are not now ſo eaſily ſubdued by candour and generoſity.—Another emperor (*b*), they ſay, received all the petitioners who came to him, with ſuch humanity, that he rebuked one of them on a certain occaſion, by ſaying, "You give me your petition as timorouſly, as if you was reaching out meat to an *elephant*."

M. I am perſuaded, that a graceful manner of obliging, has more charms than the obligation itſelf.

T. He that extorts a favour from another, can hardly think himſelf in any degree obliged.—With regard to civility, it is ſometimes blended with humility, though it is not the ſame thing. The ſalutation, *Your humble ſervant*, means, I am humble, and ſhall be glad to do you any kindneſs.—*You courteſy*, or bend your knee; I bend my body, and *bow my head*: what is this, but a token of humility? I have heard my maſter ſay, that in moſt other countries, the women alſo bow, which he thought moſt graceful, though leſs humiliating than *bending the knee*: at the ſame time, women enjoy more freedom here, than they do in other countries.

M. This

(*a*) Titus Veſpaſian. (*b*) Auguſtus.

M. This is mere cuſtom: I ſhould like bowing: I think it is moſt graceful, modeſt, and humble.

T. The *good morning*, and the *good night*, are at once expreſſions of *civility* and *good-will*, and ſhould be always uttered with ſentiments ſuited to the words: it is a conſtant ſource of pleaſure, to be wiſhing well to others; and the moſt grateful offering we can make to Him, who never ſlumbers nor ſleeps over his kindneſs to the ſons of men! A truly courteous behaviour, is candid and upright, and void of all deceit.—In learning civility, let me adviſe you to diſtinguiſh between that which modeſty and prudence require you to refuſe; and that which good-ſenſe and reaſon may ſafely permit you to accept.—Conſider it alſo as a part of civility, *to pick and cull your thoughts* for converſation, ſpeaking that which is moſt agreeable, provided it be as true and inſtructive as any thing you could ſay, and equally tending to the good of others; yet praiſing none to their face, that you may not make the wiſe bluſh, nor the fool inſolent.

M. But is not this often done by civil perſons?

T. I believe it is; but good ſenſe, good humour, and virtue, are the true foundations of That which I would have you conſider as *civility:* and theſe ſeem to be equally neceſſary in all ſtations to *civilize* mankind. It is hard for me to give inſtructions how you are to act in all parts of life. The more knowledge we have, the more communicative we ſhould be: although women ſo young as you are, ſhould ſhew a greater deſire to *hear* than *ſpeak*. In every caſe remember, that others have as good a right to be heard as yourſelf; and rather ſhew your civility by your ſilence, than your ſpeech. Modeſty without baſhfulneſs, and frankneſs without impertinence; good humour without noiſe or indecency; and a well-grounded principle of humanity, make up the character of ſuch a perſon as I wiſh you to be.

M. This would be a happy compoſition. I preſume, that the more *civil* I am to others, the more they will be ſo to me, and the leſs ſubject I ſhall be to ſuffer an affront of any kind.

T. True: As to thoſe whom you have any reaſon to ſuſpect of evil deſigns, keep yourſelf at a diſtance from them, and them at a diſtance from you: the leſs civility the better.

Civility ſometimes enſnares; and yours may be miſconſtrued into encouragement, much more eaſily than That of a woman in a ſuperior ſtation; for the world will not conceive that ſuch a girl as you are, can have much *breeding*. Thus you may be aſſured, that it is no part of *civility*, to comply with any demands or requeſts, which are not conſiſtent with the rules of diſcretion: on the contrary, it is an affront to be aſked to do a wrong thing. Let no reaſon induce you to carry your civility any lengths that may injure your reputation, or endanger your ſafety: better to ſuffer by reſerve founded upon an exceſs of ſuſpicion.

M. I am ſenſible that the diſtinctions which you make, though it may be difficult to obſerve them ſtrictly upon all occaſions, are *juſt:* and therefore I will keep them in my mind, and rather treſpaſs by too much caution, than by too little.

T. There is hardly any circumſtance in life, in which caution, with regard to the uſe of the tongue, is not abſolutely neceſſary to promote good, or prevent evil; and upon this depends a great part of what we call civility. This is alſo the great engine of truth and falſehood, and the happineſs or miſery which attend them. The ſame experience which teaches us *civility*, inſtructs us in the GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE, which is likewiſe a branch of *patience*; for unſeemly words are the greateſt proof of the want of it. "The evil which cometh out at the mouth, flieth in at the boſom:" and I know not which will be the worſe for you, to talk as if you did not know what you ſaid, or to ſpeak evil. You ſee, that nature hath furniſhed us with two ears, and but one tongue: and as common-ſenſe and prudence reſtrain us from ſaying all that we think, and every one has an equal title to exerciſe his ſpeech, when time, and place, and company render it fit, it ſeems to be the gracious will of Providence, that we ſhould *hear* much, and *ſpeak* only as we can contribute, by this noble faculty, to the *good* of mankind. The tongue being the inſtrument of the greateſt good, or the greateſt evil, if we mean to improve in true knowledge, we muſt diſcipline it, that we may ſpeak, or be ſilent, as reaſon and religion dictate.

M. I

M. I believe it will be no difficult taſk to me to hold my tongue, or to uſe *good words*, to which I am accuſtomed.

T. And not to ſpeak ill ones, requires only *ſilence*, which coſts nothing.

M. But whether good or bad, "neareſt the heart, neareſt the mouth."

T. So it is; but remember, *that the heart of a fool is in his mouth.* If it is ſometimes neceſſary to conceal our thoughts on the good ſide, that we may not ſeem to *flatter*; it is equally prudent not to excite reſentment, which may be turned againſt our own boſoms, without doing the leaſt ſervice to the party we would be glad to inſtruct, or who we think has offended.

M. If there is ſuch danger in ſpeech, it is ſafeſt to talk but little.

T. Much evil comes by ſpeech; yet when it is *right* to ſpeak, it is *wrong* to hold our tongue. There is always a neceſſity of conſidering *what* is fit to be ſpoken, and to whom it is fit to ſpeak. You will not live long in the world, *Mary*, before you obſerve, that it is the talent of the half-witted to talk much, and *ſay nothing*; or nothing but what had better have not been ſaid.

M. Some ſpeak *all* they know, and I ſuppoſe often ſay *more* than they know.

T. Great talkers diſcharge too quick to take aim; whereas modeſty in diſcourſe, gives a luſtre to truth, whilſt it excuſes our miſtakes. Thoſe who never hold their tongue, muſt often talk fooliſhly. The beſt admonition which I can give you, is to *think* before you ſpeak, and not to ſpeak firſt, and think afterwards.—To apply theſe rules to common life, in order to live peaceably, and with reputation and virtue, I adviſe you never to conſtrue That in earneſt, which you may conſider as ſpoken in jeſt; and not to ſay that in jeſt, which may be conſtrued in earneſt, to any one's hurt.

M. "Many a true word hath been ſpoken in jeſt."

T. Yes: ſometimes properly; and ſometimes to the hurt of the ſpeaker, as well as to them to whom it is ſpoken. Thoſe who are conceited of their wit, uſually ſay That which they think is bright and ſhining, let it coſt themſelves or their

neighbours ever ſo dear. I have heard very ſevere things ſaid by perſons *reputed bright*, yet deficient in common ſenſe, prudence, and humanity.

M. Innocent jeſts are with ſome people the life of converſation.

T. Yes: but it requires ſkill to diſtinguiſh what is innocent: we are admoniſhed in ſcripture to avoid *jeſting*, as a thing not *convenient*; and, indeed, it often borders on falſehood or prophaneſs. The witty ſhould never encounter people of a ſerious turn of mind, or attempt to force them to applaud what they may happen to think mere grimace, abſurdity, or falſehood: much leſs ſhould they endeavour to ſhine at another's coſt, or force them to ſmile when their hearts revolt. I remember *Jack Jolly:* he was wiſe enough to *play the fool*; but his jeſts were ſeldom ſo well ſuited to the time, place, and company, as to purchaſe him any real applauſe.

M. I believe there is ſeldom much ſubſtantial merit in jeſts which excite *laughter?*

T. Women ſhould be careful of jeſts, or they will expoſe themſelves to be rudely treated. In ſhort, "there is a time when *nothing*, and a time when *ſomething*, but no time when *all things* are to be ſaid." Some have been ſo little careful in confining their tongue, that at length their tongue has confined them. Always conſider, before you rally another, if you can bear to be the ſubject of JEST: and if you can, how far it may become you, to excite mirth at the riſk of another's happineſs. You have read the fable of the boys making what they call *ducks and drakes*, in a pool inhabited by a number of frogs: one of the boldeſt ſaid, "Ah, dear children! why will you learn ſo ſoon the cruel practices of your race? Conſider, I beſeech you, that though it may be *ſport* to you, it is *death* to us!"

M. I remember it well: and very applicable it is to imprudent jeſting.

T. The worſt part of it is, when we have reaſon to believe the party will be ſtung to the quick.—Have you alſo read the fable of the ſtork and the fox?

M. I have not.

T. The

T. The fox having invited the ſtork to dinner, gave her nothing but ſoop in a flat diſh, which ſhe could only put the end of her bill to, and conſequently not ſatisfy her hunger. The fox, who filled himſelf, expreſſed great concern to ſee her eat ſo *ſparingly*. She ſaw herſelf very ill treated, but, without complaining, meditated how to return his jeſt. She inſiſted, in very polite terms, on ſeeing the fox at dinner. All the fine minced meat, was put into deep long-necked bottles, out of which ſhe could feed plentifully, whilſt *Reynard* could only lick the ſauce which fell on the outſide of the bottles. She obſerved *ſmiling*, "I am glad to ſee you have ſo good an appetite: I hope you will make as hearty a dinner at *my* table, as I did the other day at yours."

M. The inſtruction contained in this fable needs no explanation.——If I miſtake not, the Wiſe Man ſays, "That life and death are in the power of the tongue."

T. Take heed then, my dear *Mary*, how you uſe it, of whom you ſpeak, to whom, and of the ſubject of your diſcourſe. You are to conſider *this caution* as one of thoſe guards, that is to watch and keep peace in a family. Nothing creates variance ſo much as evil tongues: your youth and ſex make it more particularly incumbent on you, not to indulge yourſelf in *much talking:* it is not only extremely difficult to be reconciled to *modeſty*; but it opens ſuch a field for familiarity among *ſervants*, as is apt to breed *hatred* and *contempt*, or *love* out of ſeaſon.

M. Many have had ſo little inſtruction, as to be ſtrangers to decency and modeſty in their diſcourſe.

T. Baſhfulneſs often keeps people ſilent. It is a great part of good education, to learn how and when to ſpeak, and not uſe the tongue as if it was given to be in perpetual motion. There is a great difference between the *reſerve* which ariſes from *pride*, and That which flows from *modeſty:* whilſt you maintain your reputation, you may purchaſe eſteem without expoſing yourſelf to the imputation of being high-minded above your rank and ſtate. Your condition as a ſervant, creates an additional caution. Your miſtreſs's ſuperior ſtation will naturally lead her to expect a degree of homage from you. When you are ſpoken to, be *ready*, not *pert* with your

anſwer. Expreſs yourſelf in as *few*, not in as *many* words as you are able. The latter is a common fault: and ignorant people, when they begin to talk, are apt to ſay a great deal more than enough.

M. If my miſtreſs's regard for me ſhould incline her ſometimes to ſpeak familiarly, how am I to act?

T. Never forget that ſhe is your miſtreſs. If ſhe ſhould occaſionally conſider you as her humble friend, your taſk will become the more difficult. If you ſpeak boldly, it may be conſidered as impertinence; and if you flatter her, as is the cuſtom of moſt female ſervants, ſhe being a woman of underſtanding, will look upon you with contempt. In common life, we, who from birth and education, have no view beyond ſervitude, when we meet much indulgence, are apt to grow uſeleſs if not impertinent, unleſs we have ſenſe enough to make a proper uſe of the kindneſs ſhewn us.

M. If my miſtreſs ſhould demand my opinion of a matter I do not underſtand?

T. Excuſe yourſelf as being ignorant; this is ſufficient: but if you are acquainted with it, relate *facts*, and leave her to form a judgment, if there is any occaſion for it, declaring, in the moſt ſubmiſſive terms, how much more able ſhe is to judge than yourſelf. This will pleaſe her; and you may do it with a ſafe conſcience; for it is ten to one if it be not generally true, whatever you may imagine to the contrary.

M. I truſt that I ſhall know myſelf too well, to ſet *my* judgment againſt my miſtreſs's.

T. I have told you my opinion on this ſubject the more fully, knowing how much the happineſs of life depends on the government of the tongue.—You know, *Mary*, that I have a good opinion of your virtue; yet, as I have much experience of the depravity of the heart, you will not draw any concluſions to your own diſadvantage, from my giving you caution againſt the worſt uſe that can be made of the tongue.

M. What do you mean?

T. LYING: of which there are various kinds. I have obſerved, to my great ſorrow, that the fondneſs which moſt people have, of hearing themſelves ſpeak, and of entertaining each other, often prompts them to ſupply the defect of

memory

memory by *invention*; I do not mean premeditated falſehood, but that in a flow of ſpirits they make their ſtory good at all events. Theſe ſtand in a lower degree, than the tedious ſtory-tellers, who tire us with unneceſſary circumſtances. The firſt are *vile*, the laſt *inſipid*. People who attempt to tell ſtories, are apt to tell them too often, eſpecially when they grow old: and many a good ſtory ill told, according to the Wiſe Man, is like mirth in mourning.

M. I have heard many lies of vanity told by a woman, perhaps not intended to injure, nor enſnare, but to make herſelf appear conſiderable to her company, gratifying her pride at the expence of truth and common decency.

T. There are many *untruths* advanced wantonly, or by miſtake; in ſuch caſes do you reply in decent terms, as, *I think you are miſinformed*; or, *I believe you are miſtaken:* thoſe who have any breeding, often add, *you will pardon me*; or, *you will excuſe me.* I hope you will never be guilty of this ſin and folly. It ſeems to be a duty of friendſhip, as well as humanity and religion, among intimates, to admoniſh in private for ſuch lyes: though I am ſorry to tell you, *Mary*, that mankind ſeldom have ſo much courage on the one ſide to *give advice*, or humility on the other, as to *take it.* With regard to your conduct towards your miſtreſs, remember that people who are really honeſt at heart, are clear in their diſcourſe, and keep cloſe to truth: from the moment you attempt to conceal a fault by a lie, you will forfeit your friendſhip with *truth*; and ſhe, your beſt friend, will forſake you. *Truth* and *falſehood* never dwell together. If you are diſcovered, you become for ever ſuſpected.

M. I am convinced, that were I to tell one lie, I might be tempted to ſupport it by another; and that a continued aggravation of guilt, or a bitter repentance, muſt follow!

T. A lie is certainly one of the worſt things in nature. I hope you will convince your miſtreſs, and every body elſe, that you have a ſoul ſuperior to falſehood, and have learnt from me, to dare to tell the truth, to thoſe who have a right to require it, though you ſhould condemn yourſelf. You may be ſure of *reſpect*, and perhaps of *promotion*; for, "as the birds will reſort unto their like, ſo will *truth* return unto them

that

that practiſe in her." The Wiſe Man alſo inſtructs us in theſe terms: "Keep thy word, and deal faithfully, and thou ſhalt always find the thing that is *neceſſary* for thee." This advice comprehends all commerce with the world.—Promiſe nothing which you cannot religiouſly perform. The Wiſe Man does not ſay, that *dealing faithfully* ſhall make every one *rich*; this would be impoſſible; but that it will provide every one with what is *neceſſary* for them, which is all we can with any *decency* beg of the Almighty, or perhaps, with *ſafety* to our virtue, wiſh for or deſire.

M. How have you found ſervants diſpoſed, as to the love of truth?

T. Found!—I am very ſorry to tell you, I found many domeſtics in my days, who were well paid, well clothed, and well fed, and in return moſt baſely ſcrupled not to *tell lies*. They meant to ſupport a certain character, by appearing to have more virtue than they could make a juſt claim to; and degraded themſelves by the infamous practice of *lying*. They did not conſider, that an honeſt ſervant makes a better figure in the ſight of God and men, than a lying maſter.

M. Thoſe who have been brought up in the fear of God, and underſtand the vileneſs of a lie, muſt ſurely be extremely diſtreſſed when they are taken by *ſurprize*; but to intend by ſuch means to deceive, is ſhocking indeed!

T. Whatever your good heart may induce you to think, lying is a vice which walks abroad with gigantic ſtrides, and lays waſte the virtue of a great portion of mankind, in this, and perhaps in every other country.

M. But do you think it prevails moſt among thoſe who are in a ſtate of ſervitude?

T. So far as their education is deficient, and they entertain falſe notions of ſervitude, they are generally wanting in the love of truth. They ſeem to be inſenſible, that "a thief is better than a man accuſtomed to lying."—You have alſo read theſe remarkable words, which ought to be engraven on a plate of gold: "I have hated many things, but nothing like a *falſe* man: for the *Lord* will hate *him*." Indeed, who can love man or woman, who ſecretly undermine the ramparts of that citadel, wherein alone the rational creation find ſecurity?

ſecurity? Deſtroy *truth* among men, and where are they to find ſhelter or defence? On the other hand, what comfort and joy does the love of *truth* afford to the heart of man! it is a joy inexpreſſible: he that tells us, that a lying tongue is but for a moment, aſſures us, that the lip of truth ſhall be *eſtabliſhed for ever!* What expectations can the liar have, beyond the preſent moment?

M. I thank God, I have always had the greateſt abhorrence of a lie, and am reſolved to be conſtantly on my guard.

T. I expect no leſs of you whilſt you continue in the fear of God. A great part of mankind is governed more by *forms*, than ſubſtantial rules of virtue and religion. A *papiſt*, for inſtance, who would not for the world eat mutton or beef on a *Friday*; or a *Jew* go to market on a *Saturday*, (which is his ſabbath) will lie, perhaps, without remorſe. Whatever is eſteemed as a religious duty, by means of which mankind hope to render themſelves acceptable to God, according to the particular faith in which they have been bred, demands our reverence, or compaſſion; but if the ſame perſon, in direct oppoſition to the laws of God, utters a falſehood, what can we think of him, but that he is a *fool*, a *hypocrite*, or an abandoned wretch?

M. How was this with the firſt Chriſtians?

T. They counted it a moſt impious thing to *diſſemble* the truth; and when under perſecution, ſcorned *life itſelf*, rather than preſerve it on ſuch baſe terms, as to be beholden to *hypocriſy*. This was not enthuſiaſm, but ſober ſenſe and reaſon: they believed in Him, "in whoſe lips was no guile!" I have heard my maſter ſay, that the *Egyptians* of old time, were uſed to wear a golden chain, beſet with precious ſtones, which they ſtiled *truth*, intimating That to be the moſt illuſtrious ornament: and well might *they* think ſo, ſeeing that we at this day, who are real Chriſtians, are ready to die for *truth*.

M. I know not well how to expreſs myſelf, but I feel the brightneſs of truth ſhining on my ſoul, as it were the ſun on my body!

T. And when you think of the guilt of falſehood, it will make your heart ſhudder, and your blood run cold.

M. So

M. So, indeed, it doth.

T. You talk like a Chriſtian: remember your own words, and be happy in your love of truth. This diſtinction is not confined to any rank or condition: nature and temper, and the fear of God, work ſo ſtrongly, that the carriage of a chambermaid, may be like that of a gentlewoman, whilſt the behaviour of ſome gentlewomen is ſo mean and unworthy, that they ſcruple not to utter falſehoods. It may be your fortune, *Mary*, to live among people ſo untractable, as to make no ſcruple occaſionally to tell each other, in plain words, that *they lie.*

M. This has a hard ſound, indeed, and a ſeverer ſenſe!

T. Avoid *giving the lie:* this is a *great fault*, though it is a greater to *tell one.* Women ſhould be as careful of this offence, as men uſually are, of what they call their *honour.* You know, that many a challenge has been given by men, and as a pretended proof of innocence, blood has been demanded in return for the lie given, though perhaps this mightily-offended perſon may have really told a great falſehood.

M. Lying then is not confined to common people!

T. Happy were it for the world, and particularly for your ſex, *Mary*, if chambermaids only were given to *lying.* When I attended at table, I once heard a lie from the lips of a great lady. I obſerved, that ſome ſmiled, ſome looked as if they were ſhocked, others bluſhed being aſhamed for her. The company might not know it, but I heard afterwards ſhe was much given to lying. True politeneſs hath truth for its foundation. Every ſtation of life is rendered the more ſecure by it; property becomes the more ſacred, and life itſelf the more pleaſing.

M. Moſt ſurely!

T. But there are ſome ſo unguarded, ſo liberal of ſpeech, and ſo indifferent with reſpect to truth, that their whole life becomes a ſcene, in which falſehood and folly emulate each other, till at length they grow callous, and know not when they offend.

M. This is truly abominable, particularly in people of education.

T. Whe-

T. Whether there is a foundation of ſuperior education, or common-ſenſe only is exerciſed: whether words are uſed in *oaths* or *ſolemn declarations*, *promiſes*, or *plain aſſertions* in diſcourſe, or familiar entertainment, in any caſe to depart from truth, is to forſake God. The love of truth is ſo deeply implanted in the human ſoul, and the common-ſenſe of mankind appeals to it ſo ſtrongly, a lie becomes ſuch a violence, that if the world were leſs corrupt, the liar would be driven out of ſociety, as we drive a wolf, or any noxious animal. From the moment you depart from it, your heart is corrupted.—You will hear it ſaid, that fools and children ſpeak truth; not that *only* fools and children ſpeak it. Want of underſtanding ſometimes diſcovers what ought to be concealed; but the liar is the greateſt of all fools. The truth which falls from the tongue of a child, by the force of his native ſimplicity, is of all the muſic in the world, the moſt ſweet and harmonious! O! *Mary*, love truth as thy mother, who cheriſhed thee at her breaſt: entertain her as thy *friend*, and let her ſleep as a *darling ſiſter* in thy boſom! If there be any object whoſe beauty naturally enchants the heart, it is *truth:* if there is any thing great and good, and worthy living for, it is *truth:* and for her let us be ready, and rejoice to die!—— What is the religion which the Son of God came down from heaven to teach, but *truth?* Let us not loſe That heaven by paying honour to the ſon of perdition. The father of lies, never conſulted the happineſs of men; nor ever had he the impudence to acknowledge that he was pleading for a *falſehood.* The worſt of mankind dreſs up *falſehood* in a diſguiſe, before they are ſhameleſs enough to turn advocates for her cauſe.

M. This is ſo true, my father, it ſeems wonderful how men who do the moſt wicked actions, can coolly, in the face of Heaven, give a voice to a lie! The ſacred writings ſay, that *God is truth!*

T. And yet you ſee how familiar lying is with many who are not the greateſt villains among men.—How ſhall we pleaſe or honour Him, in whom all perfection centers, but as we love and adore his attribute of truth? If you love truth, you love God; and will be beloved of him: you will ſecure *his* favour, to

whom nothing can be ſo offenſive, as the perverſion of ſpeech, which diſtinguiſhes man from the beaſt that periſhes!—Mark well the *character of truth:* it is always conſiſtent with itſelf, and needs nothing to help it out: it is always near at hand, and ſits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware: whereas a *lie* is troubleſome, and ſets a man's invention on the rack: and one falſehood needs many more to make it paſs. Truth ſtands in no need of any ſtudied or artificial practices: its native purity has charms which no dreſs can give it. To imagine that *Truth* is not ſufficiently *powerful* to produce happineſs, is to rob the all-perfect ſovereign Lord, whoſe dominion is unbounded, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, of *That honour* which is ſo infinitely due to him!

M. How, my father, can us poor mortals ſhew our reverence for truth, but in the familiar intercourſe of life?

T. It is from truth that the minuteſt actions derive grace and dignity; and for which, Heaven ſmiles on the cottage, as well as the palace. You ſay it darts its brightneſs on your ſoul, like radiant beams iſſuing from the throne of God! Indeed, it hath ſomething heavenly, pure, and glorious. I remember to have heard my maſter quote a ſaying, "That if God were to appear viſible to men, he would chuſe *light* for his body, and *truth* to repreſent his ſoul."

M. O my father! I would not wantonly preſume on my own ſtrength; but I hope it will pleaſe the Almighty to give me reſolution to ſuffer death, rather than tell a lie!

T. Mary, I muſt now aſſure you from the depth of my heart, that if I ſhould live to hear you have told a lie, it will be a dagger in my breaſt: all the labours of my mind in your ſervice; all the hours I have ſpent in giving you inſtruction, though they will return into my boſom, yet, with regard to you, they would be mixt with the bittereſt ſorrow. Cheriſh in your heart, the love of *truth:* "She will return into your boſom, and repay you amply for all your reſpect unto her." In the moſt *chearful* hour of *life*; and in That wherein *death* will hold up his dart, ſhe will comfort and ſupport you!

M. But there are none, I fear, who do not treſpaſs in ſome degree, at ſome unfortunate time.

T. Per-

T. Perfection is not our attribute: but the tongue is the *touchſtone of wiſdom and virtue.* Never cloſe your eyes in ſleep, without recollecting whether you have ſaid any thing *falſe, wicked,* or *fooliſh, too much,* or perchance *too little,* during the courſe of the day: repent with ſhame and ſorrow, till your repentance makes you wiſe, and you ceaſe to tranſgreſs.—Keep *truth* before your eyes!—Devote your heart to her!—Her charms ſurpaſs the beauty of the children of men!

M. Good my father, I had a dream laſt night, which has made a great impreſſion on my mind. I thought that as you and I were walking together, near the ſquire's, where the fields are encircled with his beautiful tall oaks, we were met by a figure in a flowing mantle, white as the driven ſnow: her hair hung down in curls, ſurpaſſing in beauty all my power of deſcription. A dazzling light like a ſun, or a cluſter of the brighteſt precious ſtones, ſhone on her breaſt. Her countenance was ſo ſweet and mild; her features ſo regular, and the whole expreſſion of her face ſo charming, that we ſtood as if we had been converted into ſtatues, and gazed with ſuch delight, that nothing but the extinction of ſight, could have deprived our eyes of the joy we felt!

T. Why, child, one would imagine you had been reading *poetry!* But go on.——

M. We bowed ourſelves to the earth; and ſhe ſmiled upon us, with an air of kindneſs, ſo calm and ſweet, that it enraptured my heart: the graſs appeared more verdant; the birds ſung with more melody; the ſky was brighter and more calm; and every object ſeemed to have graces and charms, as if all nature was delighted at the preſence of this perſon. She looked on us for ſome time, and then ſaid, "*Peace be with ye, my friends*; the day will come, when I ſhall requite your reſpect for me!" O my father, I thought it a moſt happy dream: the figure ſeems yet to ſtand before me; but I cannot deviſe what it ſhould mean!

T. Dreams are the children of the brain, often favouring the conceits of waking thoughts; leſs ſubſtantial than air; yet they frighten or pleaſe, as if they had the form and ſubſtance of ſolid enterprize. Often they come from indigeſted food, or minds diſtempered with violence of paſſion. We

dream of dying, and walking in the proceſſion of our own funeral: or tumbling from a precipice, wake in the fall, with grievous palpitation of the heart. Oft doth it happen, that we learn ſomething of the mind's true caſt, or of the body's diſpoſition: but let not your dream diſturb you.

M. Indeed, I was very happy in my ſleep!

T. The Wiſe Man ſays, that "dreams have deceived many, and they have failed, that put their truſt therein."

M. What does he mean? How can I be injured? I ſhall not walk thither in my ſleep!——

T. It hath often pleaſed the Almighty, in the times of the patriarchs, and in ſome inſtances ſince the coming of *Chriſt*, to interpoſe in a marvellous manner, by intimating in dreams, his pleaſure, what he would, or would not have, to be ſaid or done. Some, in our times, indulge ſuperſtitious notions about dreams, which have rendered them unhappy; as if Divine Providence intended to afflict them. Others, elevated by expectations of good fortune, have drawn abſurd concluſions from their dreams: therefore, the Wiſe Man might well ſay, dreams have *deceived* many. But he likewiſe ſays, "The viſion of dreams is the reſemblance of one thing to another, even as the likeneſs of *face* to *face*." Yours was a pleaſing dream, and perhaps the likeneſs of your mind to the object you dreamt of.—I can account for it, in a manner which does you honour.

M. I ſhould be glad to hear!

T. I ſuppoſe, from what you ſaid juſt now, you had been thinking of *truth*.

M. So, indeed, I had!

T. Know then, that *truth*, as I remember well to have heard my maſter ſay, is repreſented, not only by poets and painters, but alſo by philoſophers and divines, with all the brightneſs, and delightful looks, which you have deſcribed.

M. Bleſs me!—Indeed, I went to bed with my heart full of devotion, conſidering *God as truth:* and this dream now gives me inexpreſſible comfort! I hope I ſhall never forget it, nor ceaſe to love the *reality* of this *viſion!*

T. I am glad to hear you talk thus: happy we are, when we can make our *dreams* contribute to promote our virtue.

You

You have expreſt your hatred of lying and falſehood: prepare for the trial! You will hardly paſs an hour of life, but you will feel ſome pleaſure, or ſome pain, as truth or falſehood make their appearance. With ſome, all is art and deſign; or, in other words, *a lie*. Their *life is a lie!*—Vanity or ſelf-love, pride or covetouſneſs, influence their lives ſo much! Others, free from theſe paſſions, *their* words and actions appear undiſguiſed and beautiful. Many are of characters compounded of *truth* and *falſehood*. Among the ſincereſt lovers of truth, ſome things appear in different points of light, which occaſion many conteſts; but That which is eſſential to the peace and welfare of mankind, is an object of *common-ſenſe*: and your common ſenſe of good and evil, muſt be your guide.——

M. I ſeldom converſe with any one, but I think I diſcover ſome *good* quality.

T. "If *falſehood*, like *truth*, had but one face, we might no ſooner know any perſon to be a liar, than we ſhould take That for *truth*, which was the contrary to what is told us." But how ſhall we manage the CUNNING part of mankind, who ſometimes enſnare without telling lies. There are many, who, one would think from their conduct, have not ſenſe enough to diſtinguiſh *truth* from *falſehood*, and yet are ingenious in contriving how to deceive: if it were not that we are bound to keep a corner in our hearts for compaſſion towards every fellow-creature, theſe are the people I ſhould deteſt. *Prudence* is ſaid to be the *mother* of *cunning*, but *ſordid ſelfiſhneſs* is the *father*. *Cunning* wears the face of *virtue* and *wiſdom*; but it is as unworthy the compariſon with either, as an ape is to a man. It turns truth itſelf into deformity; and when compared with ſincerity, is as hagged,—as one of thoſe poor old creatures, who in days of ignorance, were called *witches*. Truth and ſimplicity captivate the heart; but *cunning* fires it with diſdain. It is but another name for *vice*: for where *deceit* begins, *virtue* ends.

M. Do not cunning people ſometimes ſucceed?

T. As thoſe who put off a counterfeit coin for *real* gold: but in the iſſue they are often puniſhed as impoſtors, in this world, and muſt be ſeverely accountable in the next.

M. Is

M. Is this crime imputed moſt to *women?*

T. Yes: and there is ſomething beſides imputed to bad-hearted women, which is *diſſimulation.* I have ſeen cunning women often become the dupes of their own deceit. It happens, *Mary*, that where there hath been no real grief, a counterfeit ſorrow and lamentation being put on, the very man, whoſe heart hath been the moſt enamoured, and to whom compaſſion was therefore moſt due, is ſo deviliſhly enſnared, as even to involve himſelf in the acuteſt calamity and diſtreſs.

M. This is acting the crocodile, by the enchanting power of tears: but if the poor man is wrought upon to do a fooliſh or wicked action, is he not ſo much the more a fool?

T. Alas, *Mary*, many a man, though otherwiſe poſſeſſed of a large ſhare of underſtanding, has gratified the vanity or ambition of a woman he loved, at a dreadful expence! The man, indeed, diſcovers his weakneſs, but the woman is not leſs the aggreſſor.

M. This is a kind of iniquity which is full of the devil!

T. It is like ingratitude, not always puniſhed by human laws, but reſerved for the ſharpeſt vengeance of Heaven!

M. What is the proper character of a *cunning man?*

T. He is always circumſpect, and ſometimes treacherous: hardly ever ſpeaks truth for the ſake of it. He is much given to *flattery*; and watchful of all opportunities to gain his point. A *cunning* man ſometimes means an *adventurer*; and ſometimes a *clever, ingenious fellow*, without a grain of honeſty. *Cunning* is often diſcoverable in the weakeſt of mankind: You have heard of the ideot, who finding a carpenter aſleep, cut off his head with his axe, and removing it from his body, exulted, by ſaying, *How fooliſh the man would look, when he waked and miſſed his head!* This, I ſay, was the *cunning of an ideot:* and what is their cunning, who take the advantage of the innocent and unſuſpecting, practiſing the vileſt arts to deceive, without any bowels of compaſſion?

M. I perceive, that however *cunning* may triumph by the ſucceſs which often attends it, there is ſomething in it ſo baſe and unworthy, that my nature ſhudders at the thought of it! —Is it much in uſe among young women ſervants?

T. It is in uſe among all ſuch women, and men, as miſtake it for wiſdom:—but wicked fools are moſt addicted to it. WISDOM is expreſt by generous, manly truth, ſpoken with prudence; and it ſhines forth in ſuch worthy actions, as promote our own happineſs, and the good of others. *Cunning* is a *lie*, or a *truth* artfully inſinuated, and calculated to deceive, ſuppoſing that if the reality be diſguiſed, the purpoſe will be anſwered. I hope you will ſtudy wiſdom, and practice too much *honeſty* ever to be *cunning:* obſerve however, when others are playing off their tricks, and guard againſt their ſtratagems.

M. I *dare* not offend God, by deceiving my neighbour to his hurt!

T. Now, *Mary*, were you ever ſo ſincere and wiſe a girl,—if you are SLUTTISH, or dirty, your miſtreſs will not keep you a fortnight.

M. You know I am not inclined to it. Sluttiſhneſs or cleanlineſs ſeem to be born with us.

T. I believe it is, in ſome degree: but it comes more by *habit*. The love of cleanlineſs and good order, are twins: they were born and they die together.—Neglect of the body is often accompanied with a neglect of the ſoul: and I have ever found, that filth is the friend of vice, as well as the companion of miſery.

M. But may I not be too attentive to the ornamental part of my perſon?

T. Moſt undoubtedly: this is another conſideration: ſluttiſhneſs and dirtineſs fall within the obſervation of every one; while neatneſs and cleanlineſs, like comelineſs in perſon, is a ſilent recommendation; for theſe are to the *body*, what *virtue* is to the *ſoul*.

M. Every young woman of ſentiment, naturally aſpires at making a *cleanly* appearance.

T. So I think: to be ſingular in dreſs, may betray vanity or weakneſs; but decency and cleanlineſs carry with them a preſumptive proof of a virtuous diſpoſition. Even a cleanly common beggar, naturally engages a much higher attention than a dirty one. The companion of *cleanlineſs*, is induſtry. Conſider what is proper to your *condition*, rather erring on the

cleanly

cleanly ſide; remembering, that a ſlovenly *good ſervant*, of either ſex, is ſo far a contradiction, that although ſome who are not cleanly, may have great merit, yet this will render them ſo *diſagreeable*, that only mean or dirty people will keep them in their houſes.

M. You need not be apprehenſive, that I ſhall ever be *ſluttiſh* in my perſon: I have too much pride:—nor do I believe, whilſt I keep myſelf clean, my work will be done in a dirty manner: my vanity will prevent the former, and regard to my reputation, the latter. Beſides, I think filthineſs is poiſonous to one's-ſelf, as well as injuſtice to a maſter and miſtreſs, who pay for a ſuitable *cleanly appearance*, as well as for doing their work in a *cleanly manner*.

T. My dear *Mary*, you are certainly in the right, though this thought never ſtruck me ſo much before.—I think you are CAREFUL OF FIRE, which is ſo admirable a ſervant, and ſo terrible a maſter! Of the many fatal accidents which are cauſed by the effects of this element, nine in ten happen from careleſsneſs in ſervants; either from their being in drink, groſsly ignorant, or unpardonably thoughtleſs. I charge you to conſider, what misfortunes and miſeries are brought on others by fire. Peſtilence, ſword, and famine, do not make ſuch ſudden and outrageous havoc!—There are ſome particulars, *Mary*, which through the whole courſe of my life I have obſerved with great exactneſs. Not to *leave* chimnies too long unſwept.—Not to burn papers, or by any other way make a great blaze in a fire-place.—Not to leave a drawing-ſtove covered.—Not to leave a poker in the fire.—Not to leave a candle burning in a room.—Not to leave linen airing at a fire unattended.—In going to bed, to uſe a glaſs lanthorn, or a ſhort candle and very broad flat candleſtick, taking care in both caſes, never to be without ſnuffers and an extinguiſher.—Not to put a lighted candle within two yards of a bed.—Not to bring a lighted candle into a cloſet.—Not to hold a candle near a drawer, or other place, where is linen or paper.—Not to carry a candle into a ſtable, without a lanthorn.

M. Nor even this in a barn, or hay-loft, or corn or hay-ſtack.

T. Where

T. Where the floor of any room is grown ſpungy, and combuſtible by age, be mindful to keep it covered with a carpet, or woollen cloth.

M. If a ſpark ſhould fall on it, from a candle, in ſuch a caſe it may, indeed, do miſchief (*a*).—Theſe are rules which I will obſerve, and conſider them as a duty to God, as well as my miſtreſs: for I am perſuaded that we may do as much evil for want of care, as for want of charity.

T. Do it alſo as you mean to avoid the puniſhment which the laws of the land inflict upon the *careleſs*, as well as the *wilful*. One hundred pounds is the penalty for a houſe or other place being ſet on fire by careleſsneſs: and impriſonment muſt follow till the ſum is paid.

M. I am ſenſible of the uſefulneſs of theſe rules: common-ſenſe, as well as virtue, hath always ſuggeſted to me the neceſſity of great caution in reſpect to fire.

T. Another circumſtance I muſt mention, which, indeed, properly belongs to *induſtry*.—I know you endeavour to avoid being diſtreſt for the recovery of the time loſt, by ſleeping too long, or too late:—I muſt tell you, your miſtreſs riſes very early.

M. If ſhe roſe late, I ſhould think there was no leſs reaſon for my attention to my duty.

T. Let me now tell you to be cautious with whom you make *acquaintance*. Let the number of your *nominal* friends be ſmall: That of your *real* ones never can be great. Viſiting and goſſiping create a great expence, as well as loſs of time.—Here it occurs to my mind, to caution you againſt delay when you are ſent out on a meſſage: a quick return, is a proof of diligence; as long waiting is painful, and muſt diſguſt the beſt maſter or miſtreſs.

M. I am ſenſible of the uſefulneſs of theſe rules; and that the great object of every family ſhould be *domeſtic peace*.

(*a*) Thin iron plates under the floorings of rooms, according to the experiment which I have ſeen made by the ingenious Mr. *Hartley*, of *Golden-ſquare*, are admirably calculated to check the progreſs of fire begun in any room or chamber.

T. To maintain this, you muſt conſult the *tempers and diſpoſitions* of your fellow-ſervants. If you find any one of them as virtuouſly inclined as yourſelf, make her your friend: yet do not openly ſhew much partiality, for it creates jealouſy, and jealouſy produces enmity on the part of others. You will find meaneſs of diſpoſition enough among your betters: *ſervants* generally ſhew their lowneſs. If your friend is guilty of any fraud or injuſtice, or entertains you with diſcourſe againſt the perſon whoſe bread you are eating, you may ſuſpect that ſhe is ignorant, fooliſh, or perverſe: and if you cannot reform her, and weakneſs is incurable, let your confidence ceaſe: but drop it gently. It ſhould be your part to ſoften all ſuch diſcourſe, and palliate the real faults, much more the *foibles* of your miſtreſs: but if you condemn her when ſhe is blameleſs, you are guilty of *injuſtice* as well as *ingratitude*.

M. I believe thoſe who complain moſt of others, have generally the leaſt virtue themſelves. I ſhall be on my guard, not to take part with any one, for no better reaſon than that ſhe is in the ſame ſtation and condition as myſelf.

T. That is rightly ſaid! Virtue is the only true foundation on which to build your hopes of every kind. It is a duty, however, to reaſon calmly with the perverſe, and to beg them to conſider the condition of their ſervice, which is to *repreſent their grievances*, not to *condemn their judge*, before they appeal for juſtice. If this method were taken, a thouſand family broils might be prevented, and many of thoſe evils which otherwiſe lurk ſecretly in the heart, and breed diſcord and confuſion, effectually removed.—You may expect ſometimes to be *laughed at:* but laughter never could alter the nature of good and evil. If any of your fellow-ſervants are omiſſive in their duty, remind them in civil and obliging terms. If they will not take your advice, you have nevertheleſs diſcharged a duty; and the pleaſure of it will return into your own boſom. —When evil conſequences follow, by their not regarding you, do not aggravate their misfortunes by taunts and reproaches, as weak-minded people generally do.

M. All that I ſhould ſay is, *I wiſh you had been of my opinion.*

T. Right:

T. Right: ſoft words, and ready anſwers, with a noble ingenuouſneſs, have a magic power to charm the moſt perverſe into a love of virtue: and thoſe who are well inclined, will be ready to die for you: they will be compelled to conſider your good offices as obligations never to be forgotten. You are ſenſible that virtue always carries her own rewards, if not in *temporal* advantages, yet in That peace of mind which the world cannot give, and by the hope of eternal happineſs.

M. But if *vice* prevails ſo much, the more virtue is ſhewn, the more *envy* it will excite.

T. Never be *afraid* of the conſequences of being virtuous! Thoſe who have any virtue themſelves, will love and honour you: let others hate you, if they pleaſe. In every circumſtance, you muſt take great care to carry your glaſs upright, eſpecially if you ſhould be a FAVOURITE: and if you revere truth, and act with common ſenſe, you may *eaſily* become a favourite. In this caſe, employ your influence ſo much the more to keep *peace* in the family. Make open profeſſion of your reſolution at once to be true to your miſtreſs, but not the leſs a *true friend* to your fellow-ſervants, *when they do their duty*. I have already obſerved, that they know the condition of their hire, and are free to ſerve, or not to ſerve; but they are not free to defame, defraud, or injure. Where *ſenſe* and *virtue* reign, there can be no *ill-blood* in a family.

M. But if ignorance and vice breed diſcord, is not the chance againſt the peace of it?

T. Undoubtedly: and ſometimes I have been much at a loſs to diſtinguiſh, whether the fault has been moſt on the ſide of the maſter or the ſervant. There are not many maſters, who *ſtudy* how to mix their kindneſs with their authority: and conſequently do not command a ſincere and willing obedience. I have told you, that wealth is apt to intoxicate, and make people forget that human nature is the ſame, whatever the rank and condition of individuals may be. And although the meaner the education, the leſs gratitude ought to be expected, this depends more on the *virtuous* or *vicious* diſpoſition of the individual, than on being *maſter* or *ſervant*. We are to conſider how virtue or vice is called forth by the encouragements, the temptations, or the provocations which

it meets with. I have waited behind a lady's chair, when I have heard her ſay,—" Lord!—*ſervants have no gratitude!*" —I was acquainted with ſo much of her hiſtory, that I knew *ſhe* had none: I therefore imputed her remark, not to her knowledge of ſervants, but her ignorance of herſelf: not to her virtue, nor her ſenſe, but the want of both. She knew that I was a *ſervant:* and I am ſure ſhe could not know that I was *ungrateful.*

M. But is it not ſuppoſed, in ſuch caſes, that the party preſent is always excepted.

T. It may be ſo: but ſhe ſhould have conſidered upon what principles ſhe founded her claim to gratitude; for this can never be, by conſulting a partial convenience only. —*I take no ſide*, but that of virtue and common-ſenſe, happy if by ſuch kind of enquiries I can preſerve you! Maſters and miſtreſſes, who mean to have good ſervants, ſhould reflect, that nothing is ſo pleaſant to the ſoul, as mutual kindneſs!—If they do not conſider how to promote the health, the morals, the religious duties of their ſervants, the comfort of their lives, and how to render their Beings pleaſant, upon a reaſonable foundation, what ſervice can they expect, from motives of piety and zeal? There is no doubt, but that ſervants are generally ignorant, and very remiſs with regard to moral and religious duties: and the reaſon of it is plain. Continual abſence from home, in ſcenes of diſſipation, not only deprives the gentry of leiſure to enter into the duties of domeſtic life; but the habit of ſuch diſſipation, takes off from the reſpect due to their character, and the love and honour which their zeal and humanity would entitle them to, on the part of their ſervants. Domeſtics will follow the example which is ſet before them, and expoſe themſelves to evils they might otherwiſe avoid. And what ſignifies *expoſtulation* in ſuch caſes, when *example* confutes all argument? They bring the miſchief on their ſervants, and then complain, as if themſelves poſſeſſed a diſpenſation for folly and abſurdity; and that their ſervants, who never learnt half ſo many leſſons in the ſchool of wiſdom, were notwithſtanding bound to act as if they had been all bred up under profound philoſophers and divines.

M. By

M. By your account, the gentry do not ſtand on ſuch good ground, in the care of their ſervants, as the *bee*, in the fable, of his children.

T. What is *that*, *Mary?*

M. The *gnat*, pinched with hunger, came to beg charity of the *bee*, and offered to teach *muſic* in his family. No, ſays the bee, I bring up my children to my own trade, to get their bread by their induſtry. My example is always before their eyes. Do you think I would be ſo imprudent as to teach them an art, which I ſee has reduced you to beggary?

T. Right! If the example of maſters and miſtreſſes were ſuch as it ought to be, the ſervant would be more reſpected, and mend his condition with his morals. Maſters now ſee what little merit many of us have, and complain that we want virtue: but the remedy is in their own hands.—I will tell you, *Mary*, what uſed to excite my indignation: it is expected by ſome maſters and miſtreſſes, that we ſhould ſee, hear, feel, and underſtand with the utmoſt ſkill and propriety, and yet they will *occaſionally* ſpeak *of* us, and *to* us, as if we had *no feeling* nor underſtanding.

M. This is downright folly; but it is one of the evils you told me I ſhould compaſſionate.

T. You chaſtiſe me well: for when people talk like fools, we ſhould, indeed, ſuppoſe they are ſuch. However, if maſters and miſtreſſes underſtood their own intereſt, they would always give ſervants *good words*, when they *deſerve* them, and make the hardſhip of ſervitude as eaſy as poſſible: and if *we* did not ſerve with pleaſure and fidelity, in proportion to the humanity we experienced, the *fault* would be *ours*.

M. This is reaſonable: I imagine from the character you have given me of *my* miſtreſs, I ſhall ſoon have an opportunity of knowing what *good treatment* is. But I perceive that the *peace of a family* requires more virtue on the part of both maſter and ſervant, than is generally found.

T. If the peace of *every individual*, requires the conſtant exerciſe of virtue, how is a *number* of perſons to live together in harmony, upon any other principle? You remember what I ſaid in regard to *ſubordination*. There can be no peace nor harmony, where there is no governor or director; and therefore,

fore, in all caſes of difficulty, let your miſtreſs be acquainted, and let her be ſovereign lady and judge, being cautious not to make any capricious application to her. If you ſhould be empowered to act the part of a *director*, *under her*, ſhe ought to promote you to ſome *nominal* office in the family. My good maſter uſed to exclaim againſt *favourites*, at the very moment that I could not poſſibly be ignorant that he was partial to *me*, and depended moſt on my ſervice. Was I not then his *favourite* ſervant? Diſtinctions which are not juſt, and indulgencies which are the effects of weakneſs, will naturally excite a ſecret contempt of authority; and diſlike, if not hatred, on the part of other ſervants, towards the perſon of her who is advanced to the rank of a favourite, will enſue.

M. If ſhe behaves with modeſty, there can be no juſt grounds for hatred.

T. True: but if in conſequence of *favouritiſm*, abuſes paſs unpuniſhed, it ſeems to be the readieſt way to have no good ſervant in a family: but to ſuppoſe that ſuperior ſenſe and virtue will not entitle a ſervant to ſuperior regard, is in effect to deſtroy the diſtinction of good and bad. What is nearer to us than a good ſervant!—Yet, were a woman an angel in the form of a ſervant, being a *favourite*, ſhe would be more *feared* than *loved*; and more intrigues formed to enſnare her, than are generally ſuſpected. Our *good* qualities, in ſuch caſes, often expoſe us to more hatred and perſecution than all the evil we do. But you need not fear: *truth* will prevail in the iſſue: and it is your duty to do the beſt you can fairly and honeſtly, to promote your own welfare; remembering, that *prudence* is the handmaid of ſucceſs.

M. You may be aſſured, that I ſhall endeavour to promote my own fortune by all fair means, as far as my temper inclines me: for, in truth, I rather think at preſent, how to paſs through life innocently and pleaſantly, than how to make a figure, in which I may be leſs happy. It would be folly to ſay, I ſhould not like to be a *favourite*; but I would have the favour ſhewn me, to be the effect of my deſervings; otherwiſe I might ſecretly deſpiſe my patroneſs for her diſtinction.

T. Few

T. Few people talk with ſo much ſenſe and candour as you do; but every one ſhould *deſerve* the favour ſhewn, though it ſhould firſt have began with partiality.

M. Whilſt we are talking of the *duties of life*, I preſume that ſervants, like other people, have ſome leiſure for AMUSEMENT.—How do they divert themſelves in *London?*

T. I can rather inform you how they *ſhould* be diverted, than how they *are*. My greateſt amuſement was in reading. I found moſt pleaſure in ſtoring my mind with uſeful knowledge, and in gratifying my thirſt of virtue.

M. But you was of a ſerious turn!

T. Do not *you* alſo deſire to be of a ſerious turn? You will find it in the end by much the moſt happy turn: and *happineſs*, I ſuppoſe, is the object you purſue. You may eaſily imagine, *Mary*, that ſervants imitate the follies and iniquities of maſters and miſtreſſes more than they do their virtues; and, under a notion of amuſement, more frequently raiſe a ſtorm in their breaſt, than they are able, without much difficulty, to calm again. The holy ſcriptures, and the works of our divines, of whom many have written the moſt judicious, and I may ſay, *entertaining diſcourſes*, with the beauties of the Spectators, Guardians, and Tatlers (*a*), and ſuch kind of books, are ſafe amuſements: but as a proof how ſervants imitate their maſter or miſtreſs, many a time have I ſeen on the kitchen dreſſer, volumes of fictitious tales: theſe, the more artfully they are worked up, by an ingenious penman, in order to line his own pocket, the more is the curioſity of the reader excited, to know the iſſue of the ſtory: and ſhe reads ſuch groſs abſurdities, and relations of ſuppoſed events, as turn her brains; or at beſt, ſhe ſpends much time, and learns nothing of any uſe. But there is a worſe evil than this. In theſe tales of adventures, the vileſt characters are frequently ſhewn in advantageous colours; and the darkeſt ſcenes of iniquity, over which ſhame and modeſty ſhould draw a curtain, are produced to open day-light.

M. This muſt be attended with bad conſequences. I believe we are more wanting in the application of what we know, than in the knowledge of our duty; and more inclined to

(*a*) Two Volumes in Twelves.

to read what *amuſes*, than That which inſtructs.—Is this againſt reading in general?

T. In the ſame manner as the glories of the world are againſt *ſight:* for when we are too buſy with our eyes, and let in thoughts we ought not to admit, we are the worſe for ſeeing. Be as cautious what books you look into, as you are not to burn your fingers, when you mean to warm your hands: proper books, like due nouriſhment, feed, ſupport, and ſtrengthen the mind; but in this *ſcribbling* age, there are thouſands of volumes, which ſerve no other end, than to corrupt the heart.

M. This holds equally for both ſexes. But among the labouring part of the people, do you think that *reading* and *writing*, are beſt ſuited to the circumſtances of *women?*

T. Yes: there is but little to be learnt from books, in our ſtate of life, but what is neceſſary to the woman as well as the man. Piety towards God, prudence and modeſty, ſincerity and gratitude, juſtice and humanity, are they not as great ornaments of your ſex as of mine? If ſo large a portion of the happineſs of life, depends on the juſt ſentiments and good conduct of women, is it not a melancholy conſideration, that no more care is taken of *female education.*—It is the duty of every one, to make the moſt of the inſtruction they can procure: and in this free country, where women have the ſame privileges as men, they may with the ſame propriety be taught to read.

M. The men, who do the hard labour and drudgery of life, are the moſt *uſeful*; but they are not the moſt inſtructed.

T. Therefore it becomes the more beneficial to a family, that the *wife* ſhould be able to aſſiſt the huſband.

M. If ſhe is in any degree qualified to inſtruct her children, whilſt their father is in the field, ſhe will *gain* ſo much as ſhe *ſaves*, and probably teach them better than any *old woman* in the neighbourhood could do.

T. Mary, we are *commanded to read the ſcriptures!* For this reaſon we are obliged to teach our children to *read:* and if we were wiſe, we ſhould make it rather delightful than irkſome to them. I have wondered to hear ſome of my maſter's acquaintance talk, as if *reading* was a qualification rather

injurious to the labouring part of us. They did not talk like Chriſtians, nor as good politicians. If reading were univerſal, no one could pretend to be above laborious employments on any ſuch account; nor would ſuch employments appear in the leaſt degree the harder, for its being known, from the word of God, that labour is the condition of human life. —The obedience ariſing from ignorance, is either *ſervile* or *brutal:* it is no honour to *freemen* nor to *Chriſtians!* I have heard much talk of *learning*; but the *wiſdom* which is the glory of human nature, muſt be within the compaſs of us all: and what is this wiſdom, but a habit of *thinking well*, and *acting right*; or in other words, being honeſt and upright in our ſeveral ſtations? If we are to learn this from the *ſcriptures*, let us *read* the ſcriptures! The great end of knowledge is to know God, and out of that knowledge to *love* him, and imitate him. This may be done, without any portion of That which is commonly called *learning:* we may bring ourſelves to love God; that is, to fear and obey him, in a regular, uniform manner, as the effect of faith, hope, and charity; but it is well if we can keep theſe alive, *by reading the ſcriptures:* we ſhall hardly do it *without!*—In days of yore, men were hanged for offences, *without benefit of clergy:* if a man could *read*, he ſtood a chance of being pardoned, becauſe it was preſumed, that he would learn to do better another time; whereas an *ignorant*, *brutiſh* man, might as well be hanged, to prevent any further crimes.

M. Thoſe muſt have been ignorant times. Is this what they call benefit of clergy? There are ſo many rogues now-a-days, who *can read*, they deſerve to be hanged for not *doing better!*

T. So it may ſeem: but I do aſſure you, that many poor wretches, who end their lives at the gallows, are ignorant and unlettered beyond deſcription. As to the meaſure of learning we were ſpeaking of, what more can we wiſh for or deſire? *Piety* will avail us, when all the *learning* that our ſuperiors boaſt of, if not applied to the ſame purpoſes, will leave them in a worſe condition, than if they had remained in the groſſeſt ignorance!——But however neceſſary *reading* may be, to learn our duty, the ſame cannot be ſaid of *writing*.

If *one* in *ten* of us, who are born to labour, are taught to *write*, it may be ſufficient.

M. I am told, that *men* have taken up many employments, moſt proper to *women:* and as writing has moſt regard to *life within doors*, it ſeems reaſonable, that *in our rank and condition*, *women* ſhould be taught to *write*, rather than *men*.

T. Among the laborious part of mankind, there is great reaſon for your pretenſion: the duties of a ſhop may, in moſt caſes, be as well performed by a woman as a man; for receiving and paying, taking in and delivering out, ſeldom require more than a woman's ſtrength.

M. And ſhe cannot act the part of a *ſailor* nor a *ſoldier:* nor do the offices of a ploughman, a carpenter, a ſmith, or a bricklayer, belong to a woman. In the ſame degree that women are excluded from many occupations, which might be properly performed by them, I ſuppoſe the greater is the number of women ſeeking for bread.

T. Of this you may be well aſſured: and moreover, the fondneſs of us country people to flock up to *London*, is one great cauſe, why we want people here, whilſt *London* overflows: and this is ſo much the worſe, as ſo many die there more than are born; and conſequently it muſt be recruited from hence, where more are born than die. Were it the policy of the nation, to cultivate a hardy race of laborious people, in preference to fiddlers and dancers, painters, and carvers of figures in ſtone, and others who provide ornaments, would it not be better for us all?

M. However *pretty* theſe entertainments may be, it would be better to attend to *increaſe*; and make barren heaths produce plenty.

T. Eaſily might we convert dreary ſcenes into comforts and joys to the poor, and increaſe our numbers. Money and induſtry will make a rock bring forth: we cannot carry ſoil to the *clouds*; but no ſpot of earth need eſcape us.

M. This does not amuſe the fancy ſo much as the fine arts! And you well know, my father, that all the world is mad after *amuſement*.—You have not yet told me what amuſements ſervants uſually have in *London*.

CONVERSATION. VI.

T. WHEN we parted laſt, *Mary*, you expreſſed more anxiety to be informed, how people amuſe themſelves in *London*, than gave me pleaſure. You will know this faſt enough: but it may be moſt prudent to ſatisfy your curioſity, and guard you againſt the ſnares of this walk of life. Know then, my daughter, that in *London* are many amuſements of a dangerous nature, ſome fooliſh, others wicked, and that moſt of them excite prodigality and diſſipation. There are times for the relaxation of walking abroad; and in general, liberty enough is given; and as far as the line properly extends, domeſtics having the ſame paſſions and inclinations as other people, ſeem to gratify them much in the ſame way. Happy are thoſe, who find amuſement in the buſineſs of life; and take care when they are diſengaged from their attendance, to be as inoffenſive abroad as they are at home! I believe, that to thoſe who have ſenſe and virtue, their time ſits no heavier on them, than the leiſure of their maſters. As to their actual enjoyments, you may imagine, that ſome viſit their friends occaſionally: and once or twice in a year, my fellow-ſervants uſed to gratify themſelves in the ſight of a play.

M. A play! What, a ſtage play?

T. Aye, child, a repreſentation on a theatre, of which modeſt women are ſometimes as fond, as thoſe who are not modeſt: but they make a different uſe of it, and attend for a different purpoſe. A poor wretched young creature, who had devoted herſelf to infamy, once told me, "It is time enough to repent.—I have good clothes; and I can go to a play whenever I pleaſe."—Though, by the bye, it muſt have been by paying two or three ſhillings a time; or through the favour of ſome actor, to whom ſhe had ſold her perſon. We will talk more of this matter hereafter:—In the mean time, I muſt tell

you, that your miſtreſs looks on play-houſes, according to the ſcenes exhibited on the ſtage, either as ſchools of *moral* inſtruction, for the advancement of virtue; or a rendezvous to ſeduce the youth of the land. It was formerly thought, that nothing would pleaſe, that did not favour the corruption of the heart: and now we find, that it is not ſo corrupt, but that fine ſentiments of religion and morality, wrought up in a natural manner, captivate its native tenderneſs, and pleaſe as well as edify; inſomuch, that few writers of plays now chooſe to buy their pens at a brothel: they are aſhamed of *lewdneſs*. If ever you go to a play, aſk your miſtreſs if ſhe thinks it is a proper one.

M. Does ſhe know *all* the plays?

T. People of fortune and education, are generally much deeper read in dramatic performances, than in the works of our firſt-rate divines. You would not think that a modeſt woman ſhould be preſent at a public ſhew, to hear That, which, were ſhe to lend a patient ear to in private, would blaſt her reputation for ever.

M. I will be guarded, and either take the ſafer part, and *never go*;—or, I will aſk my miſtreſs's advice, to which plays I may venture myſelf.

T. Why ſhould we take pains to injure the native modeſty of the ſoul? God knows, the heart is prone to evil. You may depend, that I ſhall rejoice to ſee you, at leaſt as wiſe as myſelf; for although I cannot put my old head on your young ſhoulders, with reſpect to *experience*, yet, if you will learn from *my experience*, I will engraft That on your heart, which ſhall produce virtue, which may ripen into nouriſhment, and prepare your ſoul for real and ſubſtantial happineſs. You are not to imagine, but that there are ſome innocent diverſions: indeed, they are too numerous, and the people too fond of them. I uſed to amuſe myſelf in walking, and ſeeing the multitude of fine manufactures and trinkets, of which the ſhops are ſo full, that I have often thought we *lived too faſt*. I was once light of foot, and could compaſs the town in as few hours as moſt people.

M. In as few hours! Why, is it ſo large?

T. Near

T. Near half as big as this county; and more than twice as big as it ought in reaſon to be. Do you not perceive, that they carry proviſion even from hence, above an *hundred* miles? Would it not be better, if the people would come here and eat them? If they and their riches were more divided, we might all flouriſh the more, and live more happily. If neceſſaries are carried ſo far, it muſt enhance the price of them: and the higher they ſell there, the higher they ſell here: and as ſoon as our landlords find we can ſell ſo high, they make us pay high for the uſe of their land: the higher *we* pay, the more extravagant *they* grow: and if *all* our wants increaſe thus, where are they to end at laſt? We muſt turn over a new leaf, or be undone!

M. I believe we muſt!—Your heart is always full of the good of the people. In regard to the amuſements of *London*, I have heard ſome of the girls in this neighbourhood talk *prodigiouſly!*

T. Alas, child! I fear they were *prodigiouſly* fooliſh: many a *country* girl, I do aſſure you, hath been undone by her love of amuſement.

M. That I believe; and perhaps many a *town* one alſo.

T. The whole of life ſeems to be dividable into two great objects, *buſineſs*, and *amuſement*. I would have you endeavour to make the firſt as uſeful as is conſiſtent with virtue and religion: and the laſt ſo innocent, as to leave no ſting behind it. The more innocent your amuſements are, the more happy for your ſoul; but if you neglect any duty of life upon their account, or injure your health or fortune, though innocent in themſelves, you make them criminal.

M. We ought then to be very cautious: for I fancy young people generally contract a ſtronger paſſion for *amuſement*, than entertain a juſt ſenſe of duty.

T. For that very reaſon I checked your enquiry. It were happy, *Mary*, if this paſſion prevailed only in the minds of the youthful part of mankind. Many of the aged are, indeed, more ſenſible of the advantages of gain, and more niggardly of the *comforts* of life, than eager for the amuſements of it; but there are numbers now-a-days, who do not allow themſelves to be *aged*, though by computation of mortality, the chance is againſt their living above three or four years.

M. Is

M. Is not this wonderful?—How do the rich amuſe themſelves, who have ſo much time upon their hands?

T. My maſter uſed to talk much of the *art of living*; he meant pleaſurable living; but he ſuppoſed this to be living according to *reaſon* and *experience*, conſulting every thing that afforded him *health* and *uninterrupted ſatisfaction*, which he ſaid could not be obtained, but as men ſerved God with a willing mind. Upon this principle he conſidered how to make his amuſements profitable to the end of living, eſteeming all the reſt lighter than a feather. At the ſame time, I could never diſcover any great difference between him and other people, except that he always *moralized:* and wherever he went, he found ſomething to approve or condemn: ſomething that inſpired ſentiments of religion or humanity: he was never at reſt, when he thought he had it in his power to do any body any good.

M. I dare ſay he generally judged well: but as the greateſt part of us poor mortals, are ſubject to ſo many pains and anxieties, our *amuſements* ſhould be calculated to *relieve* them.

T. You are in the right: but if we were to eſteem freedom from pain, as a *pleaſure*; to be healthy, as *good fortune*; to be contented, as *delight*, we ſhould find a new fund of amuſement within ourſelves, with which we ſhould not eaſily be cloyed. Perhaps what I am going to ſay, may create a doubt in your breaſt, though it comes from *me*. The rich, who devote themſelves moſt to amuſement, more frequently grow ſick of life, than us who are poor, and labour for our bread.

M. Is it poſſible?

T. I am perſuaded it is ſo. My maſter uſed to ſay, that he eſteemed room and ſweet air, in a cottage, preferable to a crowded place, where, under a notion of *amuſement*, people poiſon each other with their own breath and perſpiration: and that no amuſement was equal to a walk in pleaſant fields, in fine weather. I remember one night, when he came home, he gave his friend a particular account of a *grand amuſement*, at which he was preſent, at a *public place*, much frequented, about a mile diſtance from *London*. It happened to be a ſultry night; and it was then the faſhion to light up

a great

a great number of candles and lamps, the ſame as if it had been the dead of winter!

M. What was to be ſeen there which required ſo much light?

T. Seen, child! the people ſaw one another, which might have been done better, by means of one third part ſo many lights: but his obſervations related chiefly to the *bad air:* how people deſtroy the greateſt of all pleaſures, *their health*, in ſearch of *amuſement*. I ſhall not forget his remarks, and the computation he made. "If," ſays he, "one gallon of air is neceſſary for one man each minute, and a candle or lamp conſumes as much as a man, let the fine world judge of their ſituation, particularly in calm and hot weather, when they meet in a crowd, whether for their *amuſement*, or their *buſineſs*. Open windows; air let in at a level with the floor; and ventilation at top, by tin funnels with cowls, go a great way towards purifying the maſs of air. As the caſe ſtands, it is more eaſy to imagine than deſcribe, how many ſhorten their lives, by congregating themſelves in crowds, as if the duration of life, with theſe people, were only a ſecondary conſideration!—I go to public places, upon certain occaſions, in order to learn ſomething uſeful, as well as to gratify my curioſity. Laſt night I was for about ten minutes at your celebrated grand amuſement!——It was about half an hour paſt eight when I entered: the air was then in ſo ſtagnant and fœtid a ſtate, that although I was in good health when I went in, in three minutes after, it ſenſibly affected my throat, my head, and breaſt; and in twice three minutes more, I thought my life too much in danger to warrant my ſtaying any longer. How it fared with thoſe I left behind me, I am anxious to hear, eſpecially as I found, upon my return, the road nearly covered with coaches quite to town; I preſume all of them bound to the ſame faſhionable reſort. How the company got home within any reaſonable time of reſt, is more difficult to conceive, than how they came there."—After ſome queſtions from his friend, he went on. "Upon all ſuch occaſions, I feel myſelf moſt intereſted in behalf of the female world. Women are apt to be the moſt tranſported by their imaginations in the purſuit of pleaſure,

pleaſure, and conſequently leaſt reſtrained by ſtrength of judgment; but ſtill I am moſt partial to *them:* and therefore left this ſcene with a mournful ſpirit, having ſeen many ladies of different ages, of my particular acquaintance, and many others in the pride of their charms, who ſeemed to me, as ſo many victims offered up at the altars of miſtaken pleaſure and falſe taſte. I verily believe, that ſome of theſe will die at an early age, who would otherwiſe give birth to a happy race of patriots, philoſophers, and divines. If this kind of phrenzy is the effect of great opulence, I wiſh with all my heart my dear countrywomen were not ſo rich. You will grant, that they might be wiſer; yet, I think they are not more accountable for their folly, than their huſbands, their fathers, their lovers or friends. Duty and inclination comprehend the whole œconomy of life: and it is a motive ſufficient to follow the bent of inclination, when there is no reaſon for the contrary; but ſurely we muſt be in a fooliſh ſtate of mind, when the love of life itſelf yields to a temporary gratification, no higher than meeting in a crowd to diſtreſs each other. This can be no part of the *art of living.*"——

M. Was not he ſevere upon *women*; and rather *whimſical* with regard to his gallons of air?

T. No: I rather think he expreſſed a very ſincere regard for them. Whether he was exactly right in his computation, I cannot tell; but if your head was incloſed in a half-hogſhead, or thirty-gallon caſk, in half an hour you would breath over the air contained in it: and if this was not changed, it would become poiſonous, and you would ſoon die.

M. Indeed!—then ſweet air is life!

T. No doubt of it: and the gentry know it better than we do, in point of natural and experimental philoſophy: but it is one of the misfortunes which accompanies riches, that people purſue their pleaſures at the expence of their reaſon. They court grand ſcenes, which are generally attended by a crowd, and a number of tapers. This *they* think makes the *ſplendour!* Let a room be ever ſo large, if it is not well ventilated by freſh air, the air it contained ſoon becomes unwholeſome, in proportion to the number of people in it: and ſometimes I have ſeen an hundred people aſſembled in a houſe

not big enough to accommodate a family of ten perſons: I have found it as difficult to make my way, to deliver a meſſage, as I ſhould to paſs through this *quickſet-hedge*.

M. Can people converſe familiarly and pleaſantly on ſuch occaſions?

T. Converſe! you would hear every one complain of being hot and incommoded.—

M. Let us thank God, that *we* live in ſweet air, under the canopy of the heavens. Thoſe who injure their health, are not the leſs injured for being in a palace.

T. Ours, of all others, is one of the greateſt bleſſings, though it is not always conſidered as ſuch, becauſe it is common. My maſter's obſervations, you ſee, were rational.

M. But you ſeem to think it a crime to make one of a multitude. I muſt confeſs, I like to ſee a number of people together: it rejoices me!

T. The pleaſure hath a foundation in Nature: but I object to it when it corrupts the air, and injures the health; and conſequently *offends nature*. I grant, that a crowd delights; and that if a human face, which hath been ſometimes honoured with the higheſt epithet (*a*), has charms to captivate the human heart; if we could ſtand at our eaſe, and compaſs the ſight of a million of human faces, they would afford the greater pleaſure. But a crowd is never ſought upon ſo philoſophical a reaſoning; but rather becauſe it helps to baniſh reflexion, than that it fills the heart with benevolence.—If we are imperceptibly led to delight in ſeeing a crowd, the pleaſure muſt ariſe from good wiſhes towards it: if you make one of it, you are ſuppoſed to be an object of delight! but the contrary is ſo true, that in moſt ſuch caſes, every one preſent, is apt to wiſh another a thouſand miles diſtant, rather than feel himſelf ſo exceedingly incommoded!

M. I did not think of this; but I fear it is the caſe; and that the ſocial benevolence you ſpeak of, is the fartheſt from the heart.

T. If you are ſatisfied on what account a crowd is deſirable, you will underſtand this matter better than you did

 before.

(*a*) "Human face divine."——MILTON.

before. If this is an evil, what think you of gentlemen and ladies waſting a *whole night*, *and a conſiderable part of a day*, at one meeting,—for their amuſement?

M. At one meeting!

T. I have ſeen ſome iſſuing out of a *maſquerade* room, in the month of *May*, between nine and ten in the morning.

M. Maſquerade!——pray, what is That?

T. A meeting of gentlemen and ladies, perſons of fortune, or no fortune, clothed in various fantaſtic dreſſes, of real or fictitious characters, covering their faces with *maſks*, and changing their voices, not to be known to each other, till they are pleaſed to unmaſk.

M. What amuſement can there be in this?

T. To heat their faces, which at all other times are expoſed to the air; and to perplex each other, who it may be that is telling you your life and converſation. A merry fellow ſometimes makes the company laugh, or a *vicious* one may *intrigue:* but this diverſion has otherwiſe ſo little meaning in it, one would imagine, a ſenſible people could not countenance it.

M. But what can keep them ſo many hours from their reſt?—They are of the ſame fleſh and blood as we are.

T. Yes: but the ſweets of reſt, and recruit of nature, is what they think of leaſt, upon ſuch occaſions. Whether it is the clang of muſic, in the *dull repetition of a dance*, which confounds their ſenſes; or wine that elevates; the wonderful glitter of diamonds, or the company of the ſexes which enchants; but whilſt they have any ſtrength to ſtand their ground, few are inclined to leave it.

M. How can they be fond of ſuch an unmeaning amuſement, during ſo many hours? I have heard the ſquire's daughter ſay, that great admiration of *fine ſhews*, is fit only for the vulgar. Fine ladies and gentlemen are not the *vulgar!*

T. That they are *bewitched*, is plain; otherwiſe I ſhould not have ſeen ſo many pale and meagre countenances, with lank and diſhevelled locks, and all the appurtenances of a nightly revel, iſſuing in the morning from ſuch an aſſembly, like ſpectres affrighted at the brightneſs of the ſun. I hope the number of ſuch *extravagants* is not large!

M. Delights of this kind muſt at length overcome theſe poor *rich people*, who are *unhappily* ſo much enchanted by them.

T. One would imagine, indeed, that if they did not conquer ſuch inclinations, ſuch inclinations would conquer them. They go on: it *amuſes*, and what can we ſay?

M. No wonder that you ſhould ſo often commend the healthy countenances, and ſimple manners of us country girls. But pray, my father, do *modeſt* women indulge themſelves in ſuch nightly amuſements?

T. I think no ſuch exceſs can be reconciled with decency, in man or woman: but when you are in *London*, you muſt keep your thoughts, as well as your perſon guarded, and not aſk ſuch queſtions. Diverſions there will be, good or bad: and the times are too *giddy paced*, to allow of ſuch people as you and I, making remarks. Every one is not taught to think: and the more thoughtleſs the amuſement, unfortunately the more ſome eſteem it.

M. How do their poor ſervants fare? Can they take their reſt, or do they learn ſobriety? Have they alſo their maſquerades?

T. My maſter ſtaid out but ſeldom; and on ſuch occaſions, he did not require my attendance. You may imagine, that ſo many tedious hours, while a maſter or miſtreſs is waſting time within the doors of a public reſort, muſt be very irkſome to thoſe ſervants who have any kind of ſentiment: but they *muſt* leave the ſervice, or habituate themſelves to *wait*. In the laſt caſe too many are tempted to drink, or game, or keep bad company: and thus the maſter or miſtreſs occaſions the ſervant to become worſe than themſelves, from a temptation which the nature of his place throws in his way. Such is the unhappineſs!—*Let us pray for the peace of Jeruſalem!*

M. I ſuppoſe there are rooms appointed for them, that they need not commit any exceſs, if they do not chooſe it.

T. Room!—The ſtreet gives room enough. Some think of no other room for their attendance: others, of good minds, cannot always get at their carriages, till hours after the time appointed, and are obliged to keep them waiting.

M. Thank God, *women ſervants* have no ſhare in this.

T. You are miſtaken: they are often obliged to ſit up, on ſuch occaſions, for their ladies: and theſe ſittings-up are ſometimes attended with conſequences, not ſo proper to mention.

M. I wonder they do not fall aſleep, and ſet their maſters houſes in a blaze. I ſhall not like ſuch irregularities! But pray, my father, do you think there is really any harm in dancing or ſinging, in good company, provided people keep early hours?

T. Not in moderation, and being in real good company. The fine lady and the country laſs are equally delighted with theſe amuſements; but they are not both expoſed to the ſame danger. I ſee no harm in a proper dance, or a virtuous, ſentimental ſong, in private; however, I deſire that you will *walk*, rather than *dance*; and ſing *ſpiritual ſongs*, than *love ditties*. Can you be the better for excelling your companions in That which will expoſe you ſo much the more to danger? As to dancing, it is in uſe only in *company:* and in our ſtation, *dancing-company* is generally, I do not ſay always, *bad company*; this entertainment being rarely conducted with ſuch ſobriety, as keeps young women within the bounds of ſtrict decency.

M. You do not mean, that we are ſo much expoſed among our own acquaintance, here in the country?

T. So much expoſed, child!—I am not willing you ſhould be expoſed at all: there is no neceſſity for putting ourſelves in the way of danger. To declare againſt dancing, in ſuch terms as to quarrel with our neighbours, may be abſurd: but you may eaſily imagine, that there are numberleſs temptations, againſt which people of ſuperior condition are guarded, in the purſuit of their amuſement, which yet expoſe us. The politeneſs and civility they are accuſtomed to: the ample ſupply of all their wants: the awe which ſurrounds their perſons, with reſpect to their own conduct, as well as That of others towards them, ſet them upon ſo much higher and ſafer ground, that the compariſon will not hold. Nothing can be leſs worthy, than a gentleman or lady, who are only ſuch in name and fortune, living immorally, and abſorbed in *amuſement:* but if they are truly devoted to their Maker, and the love of their fellow-creatures, their fortune ſets them up as objects of the more ſincere love and admiration.—*We*, on the other

other hand, though bound by the ſame divine laws, and having the ſame hopes and fears, in regard to the world to come, are uſually ſo much the leſs on our guard, as we are leſs fearful of ſuffering by any worldly diſgrace.—In ſhort, if you will be guided by my experience, you will underſtand, that young women are the leaſt upon their guard at *dancing meetings:* eating, drinking, muſic, and dancing, all unite to inflame. Virtuous girls conſider, that they carry about them a treaſure, of which they may be robbed; and that men of evil intentions, like thieves in the night, are moſt on the watch to carry their deſigns into execution upon ſuch occaſions. In ſhort, I wiſh that you ſhould amuſe yourſelf, as I have ſaid, by *walking*, rather than *dancing*; and by keeping your blood cool, rather than heating it. You will hardly make your fortune, though you may eaſily mar it, by dancing.

M. Is there, then, no kind of dancing that you approve of, for me?

T. I always thought that gentlemen and ladies, in grand aſſemblies, might dance minuets, in which they ſhew the harmony of motion, and elegancy of deportment, correſponding with the ſound of good muſic: I ſay good, for generally it is bad: the good is reſerved for muſical entertainments. When they confine themſelves to this ſort of dancing, it is in character for *them*; but I entertain different ſentiments of country-dances, even among them. Theſe ſeem to have no ſuch dignity; much leſs can modeſty ſhine through the duſtineſs of ſuch tumultuous motions. There are ſome foreign dances, with *French* names, crept into faſhion: ſome of theſe are worſe than country dances (*a*). I have known parents

(*a*) I have ſeen in *Portugal*, and in *Perſia*, the kind of dances alluded to, *reſembling* thoſe deſcribed to be in uſe at *Otaheite*, a little reſtrained; as the worſt Chriſtians and Mahometans are under ſome awe. Hence it ſeems, however early *dancing* may be, poſſibly as early as *walking*; however ſome kinds of it have been dedicated to religious worſhip, both by *Jew* and *Gentile*; yet, the ruder the ſtate of mankind, or the more immoral the cuſtoms and manners of a people, the leſs pure and ſimple are their dances. Great care ſhould be taken by parents, to preſerve the decency, dignity, and purity of dancing, particularly in the female

rents ſolicitous to have their daughters taught ſuch, as when they have reached the age of fourteen, they would not ſuffer them to dance. Is not this againſt country-dancing? I once heard my maſter ſay, that in ſome countries, particularly in *Aſia*, dancing, which is generally of the kind I have juſt mentioned, and uſed for the amuſement of the *great*, is performed by hired women, ſuppoſed to be proſtitutes: and the manner of it is immodeſt.

M. I wonder how parents will teach their children any thing, which is not worthy of them to be followed when they are grown up?

T. Wonderful it is!

M. But pray, my father, do you not think that dancing gives grace to the perſon, and ſets us off to advantage?

T. I believe ſome do really walk, bow the head, or bend the knee the more gracefully for it. And doth not a common ſoldier learn his exerciſe ſtill better? How many girls have *ſet themſelves off*, as you ſay,—to be the ſooner undone! And what have we to do with this gracefulneſs, more than nature or obſervation teaches? Honeſty is the richeſt dowry! A good name a pearl of the higheſt value! I hope you will have the grace to preſerve both! And if you intend to preſerve them, uſe not the means that may deſtroy them. It is *happineſs* you ſeek, come it which way it will: if it is not virtuouſly, it is not happineſs. If the gentry cannot walk or bow, without learning a minuet ſtep, let them learn it: their wealth, as I have ſaid, expoſes them leſs to ſhameful events, than our poverty. But ſtill we are as precious in the ſight of God, as they are; and ought to be ſo in our own. I appeal to your own heart and obſervation, whether my remarks are not founded upon reaſon and practice?

M. I am ſenſible of the force of your objections to dancing, from what I once had occaſion to ſee, though I did not think it proper to mention: and though I like dancing in *ſober company*, yet with regard to myſelf, your opinion ſhall be my

female world. It is aſtoniſhing to ſee girls of the firſt condition taught cotillons, allemands, &c. all drawn from the *French* theatre, which is no purer than our own, with regard to the lives of common ſtage dancers.

my law: at the ſame time, give me leave to ſay, I believe you may preach till doomſday, before any of the girls in our neighbourhood will leave off dancing, let the event be what it may!

T. I do not ſuppoſe they *will* leave it off; but I am not therefore the leſs bound to tell you my whole heart on the occaſion. No: be joyful; but hold no tranſient amuſement ſo faſt in hand, as to let drop the far greater joys you have in view. We never are completely bleſſed, but when we look forward *to joys to come*, joys more ample, more complete, more full of triumph and delight! Perhaps, though old, I am really more inclined to *pleaſure* than you are! But I am not content with mirth and jollity alone: I reliſh more the ſweet lawn and grove. We are not to take up our ſtand for ever under this changing ſky, unknowing what to-morrow will bring forth: yet, I hope to preſerve my chearfulneſs, not ſpend my time in mortifying groans, or get a jaundice by my peeviſhneſs, though I were ſure the world combined againſt me!

M. I know, my father, you do not mean to ſhorten the line of rational and warrantable amuſement; nor am I leſs perſuaded, that *exceſs* makes all innocent pleaſures criminal.

T. And is it not exceſs, when it heats and diſorders a woman's perſon? You would not play at cricket, becauſe it is maſculine, and requires great exertion, and puts the player into a violent ſweat and agitation: does not country-dancing do the ſame? The lady that I have thought very enchanting when ſhe ſtood up to dance, before it was half over, ſeemed, in my eyes, to have loſt all her charms.

M. There is reaſon in this, to you who are delicate! What do you think of CARDS, at which people ſit ſtill?

T. Do you mean, if playing at cards is proper for you? Conſider who you would play with, and how you might employ your time more profitably. I ſuppoſe the chambermaid ſometimes imitates her miſtreſs, and may play, as ſome miſtreſſes do, inoffenſively: but it may be better for you to decline it, except the occaſion were very extraordinary; for it hath an evil tendency among ſervants, who are ſuppoſed to have no overplus of time nor money: and I have actually known

known ſome of them turn gameſters. Among fine ladies or gentlemen, it is not an improper amuſement: but people of much underſtanding, are ſeldom fond of cards,—unleſs they are fond of money alſo. But granting it to be a good *amuſement* among them, it is a horrible *employment*. It certainly prepares the way for infinite miſchiefs in a family, even among perſons reputed prudent. I have ſeen the countenance of many a beautiful young lady, over a card-table, changed, as if ſhe had been at that moment condemned to the regions of horror and darkneſs, and the devil was come to execute his commiſſion. If this had been really the caſe, ſhe could not have appeared with more anguiſh and diſtraction than ſhe has ſhewed upon the turn of a card! O my daughter, by the fears and cares of midnight play, many a complexion like a bluſhing roſe, hath been ſorely nipt; many a rich perſon impoveriſhed; many an hour, a day, a year, loſt beyond recovery! Think of this, my dear *Mary*, and avoid evil habits, that under the ſpecious pretence of *amuſement*, you may not barter away your innocence and peace, as many a young woman of my acquaintance hath done.

M. But is it poſſible that fine ladies, who I ſuppoſe are abundantly ſupplied, can be induced to play for any ſum that can *hurt* them?

T. That is the miſchievous conſequence of this habit. Some would play for the ſun, moon, and ſtars, if they could get at them!—Thoſe who play much at cards, I have obſerved, have little inclination for any thing elſe. I have ſeen all the choiceſt bleſſings of life given up for a card-table: and many a tear, which they might not imagine I diſcovered, have I ſeen ſtand in the eye of a good father, or a huſband, on this account. Indeed, *Mary*, my heart hath bled for them!

M. Are women then ſo ſubject to covetouſneſs, and ſo hard-hearted, as to wound their parents peace, or involve their huſbands and children in difficulties, for the ſake of this amuſement?

T. Amuſement, child! I once heard a fine lady ſay to her huſband, "What is life good for, if I am not to purſue my pleaſures, according to my own taſte? I like cards: and what is a little paultry money?" By the bye, ſhe had loſt large ſums!

M. I know not what ſhe might think, but "common-ſenſe will not bear ſo ſcandalous an anſwer." (*a*)

T. Yet ſo it is, *Mary:* whatever amuſement we are accuſtomed to, That we naturally covet, be it ever ſo ridiculous, ſo dangerous, or unmanly. With regard to your recreation, when you have leiſure, it is but changing your object. Delight in what you are about, and every thing will become amuſement. There are many kinds of needle-work *amuſing:* many places to walk in: converſation, when good, ſeldom cloys: if you make a good choice of books, many are no leſs amuſing than inſtructive. The love of amuſement is a paſſion which prevails in every breaſt. *We* are fond of *fairs* and *cricket-matches*, *weddings* and *chriſtenings*; even a *burial* has its joys, when people meet together, and are cheered by *cake* and *ale*. Ringing of bells on ſuch occaſions, turns the thoughts of the living from mortality; and though the meeting is on ſo ſerious an account, it affords relief from care. Whether a parent, or a loved brother, a ſiſter, or a friend, hath eſcaped out of a bad world, many are *amuſed*. By the kindneſs of Providence, the motives to mirth and feſtivity are numberleſs. We rejoice, becauſe it is the *Firſt of May*, and with good reaſon; for we then ſee Nature clothed in her gayeſt new livery. In Autumn we gladden, becauſe we have gathered in the harveſt, and ſee the fruits of our labour, for the preſervation of life for a whole year!—The love of ſociety, is an inexhauſtible fund of pleaſure: we delight in company, whether in making of hay, under the mid-day ſun; or ſpending the tedious winter-evening round a fire: ſtill we are *amuſed!*

M. You ſeem to be a *friend to* every *amuſement*, which you think rational, ſafe, and proper for one's age, ſex, and ſituation in life.

T. If it is uſed in moderation, at proper times, it is eſſential to our well-being: labour, and relief from labour, ſeem to make up the entertainment of life. In our condition, *we* are more anxious for *reſt*; as people born to fortunes, are for

(*a*) This remark was made by the good emperor *Aurelius*, upon ſome ſuch like occaſion.

amuſement. Nature is the ſame in both: but fancy and opinion having no certain rules to guide themſelves by, we like, and again diſlike, as abſurdly as a drunken man, or a frantic lover. In childhood, how natural it is to be amuſed with *marbles*, and the flying of a *kite:* and though the man putteth away childiſh things, yet, if he is *truly a man*, he will be delighted in *ſeeing children* ſo amuſed; in contemplating, how wonderfully kind the God of nature is to them!—If he covets ſomething more marvellous, and inſtead of a paper kite, he will behold a creature like himſelf, wantonly venturing to fly, or ſlide on a rope, from the top of a ſteeple to the ground, and contributes his money or applauſe to *ſuch a ſight*; if the man falls and periſhes, as ſooner or later generally happens, is not the ſpectator conſenting even to a murder—for his *amuſement?* Is This *like a man?* Is it right for a Being, formed by nature with ſo much love and tenderneſs, to act injuriouſly to others of his kind? And what doth it ſignify, whether a horſe can run a four-mile courſe, in *five* minutes, or in *ſix:* if the generous animal is killed or rendered uſeleſs in the attempt; or if the jockey is thrown, and dies, is it not a *barbarous amuſement?* Where is the *Chriſtian*; or, indeed, where is the *man*, on ſuch occaſions? We read of a monſter in human ſhape, that ſet a city on fire, and fiddled to the dancing of the flames, *for his amuſement* (*a*).—So it is in numerous inſtances: we are too apt to ſeek the *marvellous* and *wonderful*, inſtead of the *pleaſing* and *natural.* The heart, as well as the underſtanding, ſhould give conſent to all our enjoyments. To ſeek *amuſement* in any thing reproachful to human nature, is committing a violence on *humanity.* My maſter, who I told you, mourned over his acquaintance, who, he thought, were ſo apparently injuring their health, in a corrupted air, for *their amuſement*, expreſt a higher ſenſe of the true objects of pleaſure, than he who delights to make part of the crowd, whence half a dozen young ladies often retire in a fainting condition. I remember to have heard him ſay, when the newborn Prince of *Wales* was, by an act of royal civility, ſhewn in his cradle, and a number of gentry were crowding in, he

(*a*) *Nero* of *Rome. Commodus* ſeems to have been yet a greater monſter in amuſing himſelf with ſhedding human blood.

he with difficulty turned ſhort about, ſpeaking aloud, "*We are too many! I* will not contribute to hurt the young prince, by ſpoiling the air he is breathing."

M. Was he not laughed at, as a fantaſtical man?

T. Moſt probably: this well-dreſt mob, did not comprehend what he meant: though for a very good and weighty reaſon, as it appeared to him, he declined the gratification of his curioſity. Mankind are often inconſiderate with regard to the evil they may do to others, in the purſuit of their *pleaſures.* Our amuſements too, are according to our taſte: one is much *amuſed* in catching a poor fiſh; another, in running down a timorous hare.—

M. I have heard you ſay, that ſome labour harder in purſuit of their amuſement, and perhaps have leſs pleaſure, than others in their ſevereſt work.

T. I have indeed thought, that the *ſmith* hath ſometimes more ſatisfaction in ſeeing his *anchor* well forged, and hammered into its true dimenſions, than the 'ſquire in coming in at the death of a *fox:* and it may be, that he has run leſs hazard of being burnt or bruiſed, than the 'ſquire of breaking his neck. We muſt not reaſon too deeply upon the ſubject of our *amuſements:* you may conclude, that there are many highly rational and conſiſtent; and others which degrade human nature. We borrow our taſte from the cuſtoms of our country: but whatever ſtrikes the imagination either by its figure, colour, or motion, gives *pleaſure* or *pain:* the *madman*, the *lover*, or the *poet*, cannot give birth to conceits more extravagant than are ſome of the objects of our amuſement. It is *our* duty to conſider what *we* are amuſed with; and as we are to get our bread by the ſweat of our brows, to be on our guard, not to indulge ourſelves above meaſure, in what is called *amuſement.* Not to be *able*, or otherwiſe, not to be *willing* to apply to buſineſs, and to hunt after *amuſement*, generally go together: theſe often prove the bane of young perſons of both ſexes; for they ever ſeek the company of thoſe who are as idle and worthleſs as themſelves.

M. Your reflexions are ſo juſt, they check my deſires of *much amuſement.*

T. We are ſo much governed by cuſtom, and ſo often purſue our pleaſures at the expence of common-ſenſe, that nothing is wonderful! We fly to amuſement to ſweeten life, and prevent its becoming inſupportable to us, by any tedious repetition: but we ſhould remember, for the very reaſon that life is ſhort, our *amuſements* ought to be of ſuch a nature, as never to offend againſt reaſon; and ſuch as may be enjoyed by reflexion, as well as in the actual poſſeſſion. The fineſt people often go on in as beaten a track, as the aſs which *John* drives to market, with panniers filled with *ſleepy lettices*. I often lament to ſee many of them, as it were, in a walking dream: I wiſh they would find ſome nobler ways of ſpending, at leaſt a part of their time! If they would *read* more: if they would make the laws of humanity and charity more their *ſtudy*, and learn how to promote the good of mankind, the offices of domeſtic life, and the welfare of their ſervants, would be no longer dull and inſipid: every *duty* would acquire new charms. If they were more religious and contemplative, and devoted themſelves to God, they would find a thouſand delights in the glory of his works, to which they are now ſtrangers! If their entertainments were more rational and ſublime, the fields of *improvement* would become more ſpacious: their hearts would be more expanded: their minds more capable of real and ſubſtantial enjoyments: the proſpect of eternity would brighten, and caſt a kind glory round their heads!—

M. But when may we hope to ſee ſo much ſenſe, virtue, and happineſs in the world?

T. When we grow wiſer, and the cuſtoms of the world change. In the mean time, as *every one* is bound to love reaſon and religion, let *you* and *I* indulge our love of them. All men are frail; but not all fools alike: And if we ſhoot at folly as it flies, we ſhall often bring it down: and the oftner we ſhoot, the better markſmen we ſhall be.——Now, child, to let you into another ſecret, I muſt tell you, that ſo far from Heaven being unkind to *us*, or the *great* the objects of our envy, on account of their ſituation to ſpend their time in *amuſement*, it ſeems to me, that we are the happier for being free from the temptation. The ſentence on mankind

in general is, "*That they are born to trouble.*" If *labour* is often the cauſe of *trouble*, ſo is the affluence that puts us above labour. If man is *born* to trouble, trouble he muſt ſuffer! Trouble can never be a *pleaſure*; but *labour* is often ſo: and I have continually obſerved, that the pleaſures which do not partake of the nature of labour, ſoon cloy.

M. I have ſeen the 'ſquire's daughter as attentive to her needle and pencil works, her muſic and dancing, as it is poſſible for myſelf to be in darning of your ſtockings, or milking your cows.

T. Is not your employment as inſtrumental to the health and happineſs of mankind, as hers? And what is the reading, writing, and ſtudy of *learned men?* It is the *labour* of the hand or the head.

M. True: but if theſe are purſuits of choice, and not neceſſity, they change their name from *labour* or *buſineſs*, to *amuſement*.

T. You are in the right: but then you acknowledge, it is but a *name*, which conſtitutes the ſubſtantial difference; the reſt is opinion. As to the effects on our minds and bodies, the rich work for *amuſement*, and oftentimes in hopes of *eſteem* and *applauſe*, with ſome view to the common good. For theſe, many of the beſt of mortals labour inceſſantly; and even watch, whilſt you and I are taking our reſt! And what do the *poor* labour for?

M. They work for their bread.

T. Which think you has the ſtrongeſt motive, or the moſt ſubſtantial reward? If *our* labour frequently occaſions *pain*, ſo does *theirs:* if *hot* and *cold*, and *dry* and *moiſt*, which we experience in the duties of labour, ſometimes injure our health, think of the ſufferings of the rich, in their intemperate feaſts, and the extravagant purſuit of ſome of their *amuſements*, an account of which I have given you.

M. Thank God, we live here, enjoying our reſt, and the pleaſure of beholding the ſun; feeling his warmth; and receiving his bounties!—But do you really believe, that the *wealthy* oftener grow ſick of life, than *we* who labour?

T. I do not ſay, but that we, having much leſs ſhare in the goods of this world, may become the more indifferent about living;

living; but thoſe who are glutted with all that wealth can furniſh, are more apt to be *ſurfeited* with life, than we are. From what I have ſeen, it really appears ſo: we never hear of a poor man's dying by his own hands, except ſome *unlucky lover*, though the proportion of the poor is ſo vaſtly larger; but among men bred to fortunes, they often grow rebellious againſt God, and ruſh into his preſence in an ill humour. I tell you my thoughts, *Mary*, that you may be the more grateful to Heaven, and not repine at the ſeeming inequality of the diſpenſations of Providence.

M. You ſurprize me! Yet I believe what you ſay.

T. Men do not deſtroy themſelves for being rich, but having ſquandered their wealth, or inflamed their paſſions, their faith being cold and lifeleſs; no comfort in the proſpect of the future; no preſent ſatisfaction; uſed to a *fooliſh* life of continual *amuſement*; and ſick of the folly of it, they die of melancholy,—or by a piſtol! Horrible is the number of inſtances of late years!—Forget not, either in your *vacant* or *buſy* hours, that you have a ſoul to be ſaved: nor wiſh to have much time on your hands for *amuſement*. Exerciſe is due to health: ſtrive to make every thing *pleaſing* that is uſeful. This was my maſter's way, and I have endeavoured to imitate him. No wiſe man was ever troubled at the loſs of any *amuſement*; but always found a ſecret ſatisfaction, in being uſefully employed. If you endeavour to make your amuſement contribute to the benefit of mankind, you will find the advantage: for after all that can be ſaid, amuſement depends on opinion; and one is highly entertained with the very thing that is extremely irkſome to another. The time which is ſpent unprofitably to the cauſe of virtue, being loſt, the queſtione is, whether I ſhall plant in my heart uſeful knowledge, for the good of others; or leave it fallow and uncultivated? Man is not framed by nature to live without ſociety. Children are the reſult of marriage: and theſe furniſh occaſion for pleaſure and *amuſement*, as well as *care* and labour. It is very eaſy to diſcover, how little able both the *rich* and the *poor* are to ſubſiſt upon their own ſtock: they ſoon perceive their inſufficiency; and apply to ſocial intercourſe. We communicate our joys, and

ſhare

ſhare our ſorrows! As the earth abounds in the richeſt productions, ſo do the fields of pleaſure for the gratification of the ſoul of man. But we muſt diſtinguiſh: if we gather *hemlock*, inſtead of *parſley*, we ſhall be poiſoned. There is a degree of vanity in all human delights; yet That is the moſt vain, which is purchaſed with the greateſt ſacrifice of innocence!

M. The whole, then, conſiſts in the choice of objects: but thoſe who have the moſt *money*, are, for That reaſon, the beſt able to amuſe themſelves.

T. If you add, thoſe who have the beſt fancy, and underſtanding, to diſtinguiſh what is *beſt*, I grant it. Perſons who have all their time on their hands, have a much harder taſk than you ſeem to be aware of. You and I ſpend the greateſt part of our time in labour and reſt; and conſequently, ſo much the leſs amuſement ſerves us: and we have a quicker and more ſincere reliſh of it, than the wealthy, who are *hacneyed* in the road of amuſement.

M. Are rich people careful to teach their children how to ſpend their time?

T. The parents cannot give them a richer dower! Better were it they ſhould have no time, than not to know what to do with it!

M. I think you like thoſe amuſements, which have moſt an air of ſerioufneſs!—

T. I have told you my mind. The true complexion of the ſweeteſt amuſement, is of a ſerious colour. People will not believe you, if you tell them ſo: but mirth and jollity only exhilerate and waſte the ſpirits: we ſoon become *fatigued* with laughing: and flaſhes of wit excite jocularity, but this is tranſient. You may conclude, that wiſe men know what belongs to the *true* pleaſure of life: they cannot be wiſe, if they do not. The fool, they ſay, lifteth up his voice with laughter; whereas the wiſe man ſcarce ſmileth a little: yet, as a token of his pleaſure and ſatisfaction, he ſmiles: he keeps pace with the works of God: and his pleaſures dwell on his mind! Look around you, and behold theſe woods and fields; theſe bubbling ſtreams; and the lamb cropping the flowery graſs, that ſtarts from the earth by the kind hand of Nature, for his

ſupport

ſupport and nouriſhment. Do not all theſe ſmile? Are they not gay and lively? And yet you ſee they have a ſerious air. How much more is ſerioufneſs neceſſary to the character of *man*, that is born to die? What can amuſe or delight the fancy more than the contemplation of ſuch objects?

M. Many of the fine people we have been talking of, muſt know more about theſe things than we can do!

T. They come into the country in the ſummer: and ſome of them know how to reliſh it: others have ſo injured their taſte, that they are never eaſy here but in a *crowd*. They are for galloping to the meaneſt water-drinking and bathing places, for no reaſon, but that they do not reliſh their own homes, which are ſo incomparably better: but ſtill it is *amuſement*; and their habit of living in a crowd, is gratified.

M. I am told their eyes are more open than they were. Few now leave their home, except for the good of their health.

T. I believe they are *mended*. Let me ſum up my advice, by deſiring that you will make your amuſements innocent, and they will then be ſincere and unmixed: if you think of them before, and after the enjoyment, they will not hurt you. The conſcioufneſs of acting under the eye of God, will give a ſmiling face to every object, at every hour. If the dark night of ſorrow ſhould ſurround you, a bright gleam of light will break in upon you, to gladden your heart. Imagine not, that what I ſay is only a ſtring of ſounding words: it is abſolutely the reſult of my experience, and intended to give you right impreſſions of life.

M. I am fully perſuaded, that there is no true pleaſure, in which virtue has not the largeſt ſhare.

T. This is a truth as well known, as that man hath a conſcience, and muſt give account of himſelf.

CONVERSATION. VII.

T. WHAT will you do, child, when you get to *London?*

M. Do you mean with reſpect to my leiſure hours?—I do not imagine, from what you have ſaid, but that I might do full as well where I am. If it were not for the high opinion I entertain of my miſtreſs, I ſhould, with your conſent, deſire to remain in the country.

T. You find numbers of people flock into the *country* for amuſement: but the object ſo much worſhipped by the gay or the idle world, is not town nor country: it is variety! This conſtitutes a great part of thoſe gratifications, which they call *pleaſure*, after which ſome are ſo eager in their purſuit, that they never conſider what happineſs means; or not finding any at home in their own boſoms, they fly abroad for amuſement. I am far advanced in my journey: but for the reaſon that I have almoſt travelled through life, I am the better able to inform you of the beſt roads; and how to guard againſt falling from the precipices, or ſinking into the quick-ſands, with which it aboynds.

M. Have you found life ſo dangerous?

T. Indeed I have: the *youthful* part of mankind, are ſuppoſed to have the quickeſt taſte of *pleaſure*, ariſing from their paſſions; whilſt the *aged*, looking back on the dangers they have paſſed through, think how they ſhall ſecure themſelves againſt *pain.* I am ſorry to tell you, *Mary*, that numbers are led by the force of ignorance, or the blindneſs of paſſion, like oxen crowned with garlands, to be ſacrificed at the altars of *falſe pleaſure!* If any of your acquaintance, or *pretended friends*, ſhould repreſent me to you, as an enemy to innocent gratifications, depend on it they are not your friends; they do not mean to aſſiſt you in maintaining your innocency; ſuſpect them to be *wolves* in *ſheeps* clothing.

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M. I am ſenſible, that you mean to ſhew me things in a true light, fair and undisguiſed; and you need not be afraid: It is eaſy to diſcover the ſnake in the graſs.

T. Not ſo eaſy; it is not right you ſhould think lightly of the power of allurement. By pleaſure is generally underſtood, the delights of fancy: whatever favours our darling paſſions, and particularly as it ſoothes the inclination of the ſexes for each other; whatever diverts and amuſes, or gratifies the ſenſes, is commonly called *pleaſure*.—But I have more than once obſerved, that the greateſt advocates for ſuch pleaſure, are the moſt eaſily betrayed into error and deluſion: they do not allow themſelves time to conſider what ought to be done, but what they like.—At the ſame time, it is moſt apparent, that the ordinary conſequences of unreſtrained paſſions, are pain, ſorrow, and contempt. If we did not ſo often ſee how the brutal part of our compoſition prevails over the angelic mixture; and all that is manly, great, and good, ſo often yielding up its empire to a headſtrong imagination, we might wonder how any *rational* Being ſhould forfeit chearful meals, untroubled ſlumbers, lightneſs of heart, gentle diſpoſitions, and calm hopes, for the gratifications, which mere animals, or among the gentry, perſons who call themſelves *men of pleaſure*, ſo conſtantly purſue! Their imaginations are often clouded with an inſenſibility to all manner of delight, but that which is common to all creatures that extend their ſpecies. Theſe pleaſures, though fleeting as the wind, play before their eyes, and ſometimes glitter like ſun-beams, or the morning dew: but poverty, pain, or contempt frequently attend them. Know you, my daughter, that however things may *appear* to your youthful fancy, the *days of pleaſure*, are often the *vigils of repentance!*

M. I do not comprehend your meaning.

T. Vigils, Mary, are extraordinary nightly devotions, performed as penances for great ſins; or as religious taſks, in convents and nunneries, among the papiſts: and this may be applicable to the preſent caſe.

M. I am perſuaded, that *falſe pleaſure* is the forerunner of *true ſorrow:* and that thoſe are fools who give themſelves up to work wickedneſs!

T. The

T. The *love of pleaſure* not properly diſtinguiſhed, is the grand fountain from which flow the misfortunes of mankind. The Wiſe Man informs us, in very ſtrong terms, that "thoſe who take pleaſure in wickedneſs, ſhall be *condemned*:" as on the other hand, he ſays, that "he who reſiſteth pleaſures, crowneth his life."

M. I believe there are many profeſſed lovers of pleaſure, who love nothing elſe.

T. You will find, that ſuch perſons conſider all diſcourſe upon virtue and religion, as mere *canting*. Eating, drinking, and mirth, play, news, or any thing that is *not ſpiritual, nor ſerious*, being their conſtant entertainment, all their hopes, and all their joys, ſeem to be confined to their *five ſenſes*.—Judge you, if this be fit for a creature, that is born the heir of immortal happineſs!

M. It muſt be granted, by every *Chriſtian*, that theirs is a religion of *ſelf-denial*.

T. Yet ſuch as leads to the pureſt and moſt laſting ſatisfaction. In courting *pleaſure*, and in ſhunning *pain*, we ſeem to act upon one and the ſame principle; but the events may be very different. Many pains, which ſoon paſs away, lead to an eternity of joy: whilſt many pleaſures, yet quicker in their motion, lead to an eternity of miſery!

M. Indeed, I believe this: yet, *true pleaſure*, you ſay, is our happineſs.

T. As *falſe* is our miſery! The bowl of pleaſure is often daſhed with poiſon; but Heaven never preſents us with any cup, that is not full of health and comfort! Our exiſtence is not bounded to a day: the conſequences of our thoughts and actions remain with us, and are acceptable, or not acceptable to the Eternal Wiſdom. So far from being averſe to *pleaſure*, in the great view of innocent gratifications, we cannot be grateful to God, but as we live *pleaſed* and *ſatisfied*; and *rejoice* in our Being! Have you not obſerved, when you have ſuffered pain or *labour* in the diſcharge of ſome *generous* office or duty, that the painful part ſoon vaniſhed, and the pleaſurable effects remained? Mark the difference: ballance the account: See how little you could be the worſe for any ſuch pain, and how little the better for any unwarrantable pleaſure, when

both are paſt. If the crown of life is to reſiſt pleaſure; if the reward of ſuch reſiſtance will be immortal happineſs: does not the thought inſpire your ſoul with a contempt of pleaſure, as we commonly underſtand all purſuits of a criminal kind? Even ſuch as are only *merely fanciful*, when theſe divert us from the *ſubſtantial* duties of life, they become ſinful. The pleaſures of the underſtanding, and a good heart, never cloy: but among them who place their happineſs in the gratification of their ſenſes, the more of theſe gratifications they have, the more miſerable they make themſelves.

M. I believe, that not to deſire any dangerous or vicious pleaſure, is a temper of mind, which affords more ſolid and equal delight, than the enjoyment of them can furniſh.

T. To a rational mind, the higheſt joy is the contempt of ſuch pleaſure. Whenever we are wrapt up in *delights* which are hurtful, we do in effect *diſcharge all our virtues*. Man being a rational, ſpiritual, and accountable creature, his proper happineſs muſt be lodged in the ſpirit, and not in the fleſh. If I might have all the ſenſual pleaſures that the world can afford, ſhould I not deſert my ſoul if I accepted of them? Should not I loſe the *liberty* of my underſtanding, and become an abſolute *ſlave* to my ſenſes? What a ſtrange exchange ſhould I make, and what a brute ſhould I become! For the ſame reaſon, thoſe who having riches, and employ them in the purchaſe of pleaſures, which are *trifling* or unwarrantable in the ſight of God, are in effect, only receiving the wages of *ſin* and *ſorrow*, living in a ſlaviſh dependance on the *tyranny* of their own *paſſions*. Every indulgence that is wicked or fooliſh, or ſuch as interferes with our *doing good*, *which is the calling of man*, is attended by a ſting of *conſcience*; we bluſh within ourſelves, and are ſecretly aſhamed of our folly and wickedneſs. *You* yet know but little of yourſelf, or of the world; and therefore I cannot appeal to *your obſervation*; but I can tell you from *my own*, that the deſire of pleaſure creates ſecret wiſhes, and expenſive purſuits: it involves its followers in difficulties: they often depart from their true intereſt: they ſacrifice their *virtue*, and conſequently their *happineſs*, to a mere idol, a *fancy*, of their own ſetting up, which often falls down and cruſhes them. Among *us*, ſcenes of jollity are often attended with bad conſequences.

M. In-

M. Indeed, my father, I believe that many have too much reaſon to think that *company-keeping*, leads young women into great danger.

T. I have heard ſome of my neighbours, comfort themſelves on their death-beds, that they never were *company-keepers*; the very thing itſelf, *in their opinion*, and as they ſaw others *abuſe* the liberty of *modeſt* converſation, implying a degree of guilt. On occaſions of jollity, ſome people know not what they are about: they do not ſtudy the leſſon of being *merry* and *wiſe*. Before we indulge ourſelves, we ſhould *know our company*; and be always careful not to beat down the barriers of decency. Our great philoſopher and friend, ſays, that "the heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning; but the heart of the fool is in the houſe of mirth:" not teaching us, that a chearful mind is not the medicine of life, for *he* ſays *it is*; but that the wiſe rather go where they can do *ſome real good*; and ſhudder not at beholding the moſt ſerious events, whilſt *fools* conſider only how they ſhall be *diverted*; and contract an averſion to every thing that requires manly thoughtfulneſs. How very apt we are to ſhun thoſe who are *afflicted*; as if affliction were an infectious diſeaſe. In the ſame manner, many run from the death-bed even of a *friend*. And why is this? They are not *rationally* manly, nor *religiouſly* brave. You, my child, are yet in a ſtate of innocency, and will hardly diſcern the full force of all the reaſons which I give you for caution and ſelf-command: but you will increaſe in ſtrength with time and obſervation. Be wiſe very early, or you may remain fooliſh very late, juſt as your heart inclines you. Think of the advantages you may now receive from *me*. I have lived long enough to ſee my own defects and *weakneſs*; and from hence derive a degree of *ſtrength* which it is not poſſible for you to enjoy without aſſiſtance. Wearied with the vanity of the world, the mind naturally turns to its ſupreme good! How *can* we learn, if time, reflexion, and obſervation do not teach? Nor is it time and obſervation only: what young perſon in his ſenſes, was ever a *profeſſed* enemy to *truth?*—But moſt young people act, as if they were afraid of diſcovering it *too ſoon*.

M. How

M. How ſtrange ſoever this may ſeem, I fear it is even ſo; but whether it be in youth or age, in the *prince* or the *beggar*, I am ſatisfied that vanity and folly are the ſame.

T. This is the caſe: we all diſdain the name of ſlavery; but no man can with any propriety pretend to be a *maſter* of himſelf, ſo long as he is a *ſlave* to any thing elſe. *Reaſon* grows ſtronger by the exerciſe of it; ſo the love of *falſe* pleaſure acquires ſtrength by indulgence. Reaſon is a phyſician to the *mind*, as well as the *body*; but an eagerneſs for pleaſure, creates a diſeaſe: it is a feveriſh habit of mind and body, and often works as a lingering poiſon. All of us have our joys and ſorrows, ſome which *are*, and ſome which *are not* known to the world: and it is the buſineſs of every one, to make his life paſs as agreeably as he can. Even the wiſe *ſometimes* deſcend to *trifling* matters; but they are *innocent trifles*: and they do not *devote* their lives to what is underſtood by *pleaſure*. The whole ſcene of things, paſt, preſent, and to come, wears a *ſerious* countenance: it does not follow, that we do not naturally court pleaſure, and ſhun pain: but there is *one* diſpoſition, which promotes our juſt views, and prepares us to drink at the fountain of everlaſting joy: need I add, that there is *another*, which threatens our baniſhment for ever from it. Aſk the man of pleaſure which is beſt?—When the Wiſe Man recommends the *reſiſtance* of pleaſure, as the means of *crowning* life, he certainly muſt be underſtood to allude to ſinful gratifications. Where lyeth the *path of glory*, which the *learned*, the *great*, and *good*, the *philoſopher* and *patriot*, have in all ages talked ſo much about? It is not the bed of eaſe, nor the amuſements of the fancy!—As to the difficulties there are to encounter, in this purſuit, we muſt conſider what they really are, and how they may be conquered; and not frighten ourſelves with the ſight of our own imperfections. Let *us Chriſtians* conſider, that we are promiſed not to be *tempted* above that which we are *able* to ſubdue. *Experience* is the gift of time; but *common-ſenſe* is ever at our beck. The firſt will ſtick cloſe by us, when we have it; inſomuch that we feel our offences increaſe, in proportion as we neglect its admonitions: the *laſt* is born with us; and we only want honeſty and candour to exerciſe it: it never forſakes us, till we forſake it, and determine to act againſt our better judgment.

M. Do

M. Do you think the pleaſures of life, a balance for the pains of it; I mean *innocent* pleaſures, and *unavoidable* pains?

T. Here it is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh, and weigh life in an equal balance. If we attempt to throw too much into the ſcale, even of innocent pleaſures, as I have juſt now mentioned, we ſhall find it light in the balance: we may, by cultivating a right ſenſe of duty, convert the *whole of life into a pleaſure.* If we recur to the *Wiſe Man* ſpeaking of *Wiſdom*, he ſays, "*Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace!*" In common life, to which we muſt refer, the more pleaſure we ſeek beyond meaſure, and as it were, for *pleaſure's* ſake, the leſs we ſhall probably find. A pleaſant diſpoſition, is pleaſure; but a diſpoſition to pleaſure, is a different thing, and creates infinite diſappointments: the firſt ariſes from *habit*, or grows from the occaſion: the laſt, by an immoderate purſuit, becomes vicious. The wiſe and induſtrious bee, extracts the honey from the flower with ſo much art, that it remains in a flouriſhing ſtate: the object is not impaired. If we incautiouſly uſe things of an indifferent nature, not obſerving where to ſtop, we are led inſenſibly to the utmoſt verge of innocence, and are in danger of paſſing it. If we commit ourſelves to the guidance of *paſſion*, to lead us to *pleaſure*, the blind cannot lead the blind: they will both tumble into the ditch. We may, indeed, graſp our object, but we ſhall be more diſappointed, than if it had vaniſhed from our ſight. This ſeems to be the order of Nature, and of Nature's God, with regard to us *moral* and accountable Beings. Do you remember, *Mary*, the fable of the boy and the butterfly?——

M. What is it, my father?

T. "A boy, greatly ſmitten with the colours of a butterfly, purſued it from flower to flower, with indefatigable pains. Firſt he aimed to ſurprize it among the leaves of a roſe; then to cover it with his hat, as it was feeding on a daiſy; now hoped to ſecure it, as it reſted on a ſprig of myrtle; and now grew ſure of his prize, perceiving it loiter on a bed of violets. But the fickle fly continually changing one bloſſom for another, ſtill illuded his attempts. At length, obſerving it half buried in the cup of a tulip, he ruſhed forward, and ſnatching

it

it with violence, cruſhed it all to pieces. The dying inſect, ſeeing the poor boy ſomewhat chagrined at his diſappointment, addreſſed him, with all the calmneſs of a Stoic, in the following manner:—Behold now, the end of thy unprofitable ſolicitude! and learn, for the benefit of thy future life, that all pleaſure is but a *painted butterfly:* which, although it may ſerve to amuſe thee in the purſuit, if embraced with too much ardour, will periſh in the graſp." This I take to be the true caſe of all whoſe brains are heated with vain deſires; and whoſe eagerneſs makes them forget what is real and ſubſtantial pleaſure.——But all *delights* are not therefore vain: on the contrary, of all vanities, vexation of ſpirit is the greateſt!——When we talk of pleaſure, let us conſider what is its end, and what it is to end in. Pleaſure is the means, but HAPPINESS is the end! This is what we long for!

M. If virtue ſuits my inclination, and makes me joyful, what can pleaſure do more? May not virtue and pleaſure become the ſame thing to me, and produce all the happineſs I have any title to?

T. Moſt certainly: if by pleaſure, you mean true pleaſure; otherwiſe the conſequences will be *unhappy*. If you conſult your inclinations only, and not the reaſons which may occur to you, why ſome of them *muſt* not be indulged, you will be inſenſibly led into actions, which tend to vice, if not directly into vice itſelf. Reaſon never diſapproves of things that appear *innocent*, ſuppoſing them *well-timed*, and that we gratify ourſelves as common-ſenſe and prudence direct. Philoſophers may diſpute, whether all things ſhall be referred to *virtue* or to *pleaſure*; but where theſe mean the ſame thing, the diſpute is at an end. True pleaſure and real virtue, are the ſame, with regard to their effects on our minds; they make us happy! Even the throne of God is repreſented as having *eternal pleaſure* ſeated on the right hand of it. The true pleaſure of a *man*, muſt be guided by *reaſon*, or how can it be called *his* true pleaſure, who is a rational creature, and not a brute? We may ring chimes on *virtue* and *pleaſure*; but we ſhall find in every inſtance, that the ways of *virtue*, are ways of *pleaſantneſs*, and that all *her* paths are peace. But conſider

how this can be ſaid of *vice*, or vicious pleaſure? Her ways, however pleaſurable ſome of them may ſeem to be, as we travel through life, yet they will ſet us up at laſt in the Inn of *repentance* or miſery! The fable of the bees is very applicable to this ſubject.

M. I do not remember it.

T. Two bees went in queſt of honey: one was an epicure, the other temperate; or we may call him a philoſopher.—At length they found a wide-mouthed phial, hanging beneath the bough of a peach-tree. It was enchanting to the eye, and to the ſmell, for it was filled with *honey* ready tempered. The *epicure*, in ſpite of the remonſtrances of his friend, ventured in to indulge himſelf. The philoſopher, ſuſpicious of the danger, flew off to fruits and flowers, where the moderation of his meals, improved his reliſh of the true enjoyment of them. In the evening, returning that way home to his hive, he found his friend ſurfeited with ſweets, as unable to *leave* the honey, as to feaſt on it; his wings were clogged; his feet enfeebled; his whole frame was enervated and unhinged; he was only able to bid his friend a laſt farewell, lamenting that he was too late ſenſible of the good advice which had been given him: acknowledging that unreſtrained indulgence in *falſe pleaſure*, is unavoidable deſtruction.

M. A fine leſſon truly, to thoſe who purſue unwarrantable pleaſure!

T. Alas, *Mary*, this propenſity in our nature, hath often made *wiſe men* fools, and the *brave* cowards!

M. How can That be?—

T. Are we not all *ſubject* to forſake our duty? And let thoſe that ſtand, take heed leſt they fall!

M. But ſtill there are ſome pleaſures in youth, which are not in character, in age.

T. True: youth, as I have ſaid, hath a quicker ſenſe of things, which regard the fancy: and being new in the world, objects are *new to it:* and novelty is a great recommendation. But the great object of life, is to guard againſt thoſe vices, to which we are moſt inclined, not only at the different periods of age, but alſo by our peculiar turn of mind, and frame of conſtitution. In general, ſenſuality, riot, and exceſs,

prevail when we are young; covetouſneſs and peeviſhneſs, when we grow old. Thoſe whoſe lives are rendered vexatious and painful in the purſuit of pleaſure, and they who are miſerable through avarice, are both contemptible Beings.

M. Neither of theſe ſituations can be deſirable to a rational creature. I believe that it is more eaſy to fix our notions of *pleaſure*, by the pleaſantneſs which attends our minds, when we act virtuouſly, than by any thing that our *ſenſes* can *promiſe*, much leſs *ſecure* to us.

T. This is truly the caſe: you and I, *Mary*, riſe early of a morning to our work, conſcious that it is our duty: it grows into a habit: and ſo long as we are in health, and not unavoidably expoſed to any extreme rigour or inclemency of ſky, there is a ſubſtantial *pleaſure* in it. We provide for the neceſſities of nature; and the effects are pleaſurable. Our labour in the dairy, and in the field, are often delightful: and the hope of their being rewarded with *ſucceſs*, gives an additional comfort! The gratification of hunger, thirſt, and ſleep, nature has made very grateful, eſpecially when our aliment is wholeſome, and our reſt ſweet and uninterrupted. It is pleaſure to keep our bodies clean, and properly covered; to breathe the pure air; to behold the ſun; to hear the muſic of the woods; and to ſee the enchanting verdure of the earth! Is it not *pleaſure* to offer up our addreſſes to Heaven, in confidence that we are under the protection of a Being, whoſe power, whoſe juſtice, whoſe wiſdom, and mercy, is without bounds? We cannot ſay, that it is pleaſure to be in pain or ſickneſs, ſorrow or affliction; but it is a ſincere pleaſure to think, that when theſe come upon us, we may convert them to *good*, by our ſubmiſſion; as they will ſpeedily ceaſe, by the changes and chances of life, or by a *happy death*. In the mean time, no action, no thought, generous, charitable, and good, can paſs without its pleaſure! Every kind word we hear or ſpeak is pleaſing to us. One pleaſure produces another of the ſame kind; and we ſeem to be the happy parents of a moſt beautiful and virtuous family. *Moderation* rewards us with pleaſure, as *intemperance* afflicts us with pain. Let PRUDENCE be your companion: ſhe is generally a friend

to

to virtue, and will be yours. " Indeed, ſhe may be ſtiled, an univerſal virtue which enters into the compoſition of all the reſt. Judgment is her throne, and ſilence her ſanctuary :" Temporal happineſs depends on her : and virtue claims kindred with her. Her power and authority are peculiarly applicable to the good order and œconomy of life. Behold the conſequence of deſerting her ! Our couſin *John Squander*, uſed to talk like a wiſe man, for he does not want ſenſe in diſcourſe ; but he hath *acted* like a fool. Prudence has forſaken him : he indulges his fancy, inſtead of conſulting his ſafety and comfort : he miſtakes *profuſion*, for *generoſity :* he, who really cannot command *one hundred pounds*, has lately engaged in an expence, which cannot be defrayed with *three !* What will it come to ?

M. John is yet young : and the youthful are the moſt prodigal, though perhaps *they* ſhould provide for life with the more diligence, becauſe they are *young*.

T. They are leſs provident, as having leſs experience. The good part, who know not what it is to want money, their affections being warmer, their hearts are more open to the miſeries of others. Whether you have little or much, take care of it : " Fools and their money are ſoon parted :" whereas money may ſtand your *friend*, when all others fail you. The caution holds ſtronger for them who have but *little*, than for thoſe who have a *great deal*. In money affairs, remember that " often counting makes good friends :" and the Wiſe Man recommends to us, " to hedge our poſſeſſions about with thorns, and bind up our ſilver and gold." An *unneceſſary* confidence, is an *abſurd* confidence : therefore, " as long as you have breath, give not yourſelf over to any ; for better it is, that others ſeek you, than you ſtand in their courteſy. —Help thy neighbour according to thy power ; —but beware not to fall into the ſame ſnare." Thoſe that do not ſee into their own affairs, and think only of the preſent moment, put it out of their power to retrieve their extravagance. And ſome deceive themſelves into a belief, that their *friend* or *neighbour* will ſhew them regard, when they have not reſolution to ſhew themſelves any.

M. But are not the covetous, who place their *affections* on money, often tempted to do bad things for the ſake of it? Which of the two extremes is the moſt dangerous?

T. The laſt is the moſt immoral; and therefore the worſt. Endeavour to avoid being in the wrong in any reſpect, not even by being *too much* in the right. The vulgar proverb ſays, "Break not thy ſhin againſt that which lies not in thy way." Be cautious that in the purſuit of a *good*, which cannot be of any great moment, you do not involve yourſelf in an *evil*, which may make you repent all the days of your life. Learn to ſuffer ſmall inconveniences, rather than hazard great miſchiefs. Be aſſured, that *prudence* is ſo much the favourite of *wiſdom*, they can hardly live ſeparated. Charity forbids our miſtruſting any one; but as charity without *prudence*, cannot ſubſiſt, it is a part of charity to be prudent. It would be *madneſs* for you to truſt any one with your goods, or your perſon, with whom you are not acquainted; or knowing that they have not the fear of God before their eyes, nor reſpect the laws of their country. Let them *talk* as they pleaſe, "*deeds* are fruit; *words* are but leaves." The more laviſh ſuch perſons are in their promiſes, the leſs they are to be depended on. When you examine your own heart, and find it inclined to diſcharge your duties to God, you will be inſenſibly led to act *prudently*. If you deſire any thing *criminal*, I need not tell you, that you are wicked; if *dangerous*, you are imprudent.

M. And what do you think, my father, my deſires will moſt depend on?

T. What can they depend on, but the *good* or *evil* of your own heart, the company which you keep, and the perſons you are attached to? To *judge well*, and know when to hold your tongue, are the things moſt eſſential to *prudence*. Therefore remember, that if you conſult with a fool, he cannot keep council.

M. I am ſenſible, how much my character, as well as the improvement of my mind, depends on the company I keep: and therefore, in point of prudence, I will aſſuredly follow the Wiſe Man's advice: "Go from the preſence of a fooliſh man, when thou perceiveſt not in him the lips of knowledge."

T. If

T. If you follow this advice, you will be guarded againſt the bad effects of communication with a fool.—But there is another character full as bad, I mean the *diſſembler*, or HYPOCRITE. Unexperienced as you are, you will hardly think it *poſſible*, that man or woman, under certain circumſtances, making warm profeſſions of friendſhip or eſteem, ſhould prove *falſe*; but I am ſorry to tell you, it is no wonderful event, to find people, who put on the diſguiſe of piety and religion, the better to enſnare thoſe, who, being honeſt and upright themſelves, think well of the reſt of mankind.——Such, my daughter, is the world, *or rather the worſt part* of the world: and therefore, an undiſtinguiſhing confidence, is as contrary to good ſenſe and prudence, as a buſy, meddling behaviour. Yet do not think of your fellow-creatures, in general, nor of individuals, ſo ill as they may deſerve. Try to find reaſons of the ſofteſt kind, for the evils committed againſt you: better ſuffer by thinking too well of a perſon, than do him *injuſtice:* for *ſuffering* evil, is a ſlight evil, compared to the *doing* it. Think as highly of mankind, as *prudence* will allow; and ſupport the *honour* of human nature, as far as common-ſenſe and candour will admit. There is ſo much evil in the world, that wantonly to add to the load of it, is being wantonly wicked. You may be ſure there will be ſo much the leſs evil for your avoiding it in your own perſon: and you may be alſo ſure, that no good is ſo intereſting to you, as the mercy and compaſſion, in which your ſoul is concerned.

M. This ſeems to be *good reaſoning*, my father!

T. Whilſt you liſten to prudence, let it not counteract your charity, leſt it degenerate into a *ſordid vice*, the more infamous from its aſſuming the name of a virtue.

M. It is ſaid, that fools have fortune:—Pray, how is this to be underſtood with regard to *prudence?*

T. Not that *fools only* have fortune, for then we ſhould ſee folly preferred to wiſdom more than it uſually is, in ſpite of experience. No: the contrary is generally true. But it cannot be denied, that "time and chance happen to all men:" We often ſee even weak-minded perſons ſucceed, whether by the beneficence of other people; by their being bred to mechanic arts, which do not require much underſtanding;

ing; or by their being contented to go on in a *beaten track*, when perſons of a more lively temper, ſtronger paſſions, or leſs ſteady judgment, are apt to ſtray out of it, and loſe their way. But to one fool who ſucceeds by the ordinary paths of ſucceſs, I mean *prudential induſtry*, there are great numbers that fail. Whenever you have occaſion to contend with the proud or vain, due precaution, or prudence, will give you a great advantage.

M. This I have had occaſion to obſerve, more than once; but I generally found *ſilence* the moſt uſeful weapon.

T. So it generally proves.—There are three great objects, *Mary*, which take up the attention of mankind, according to their different taſtes and inclinations: *religion*, *buſineſs*, and *pleaſure*. The love of one or other of theſe, you will find prevail in almoſt every character: and this is often gratified in ſuch different ways, that one would almoſt imagine men had different ends in view.

M. What end can they have, but their happineſs? and That muſt be the beſt of the *three*, which contributes moſt to the peace of the mind.

T. True: this is *happineſs! The peace which the world cannot give*, is the great object of our petitions to heaven. *Religion*, *buſineſs*, and *pleaſure*, properly attended to, are all compatible: *Virtue* ſmiles upon them all,—when they are conducted properly. Religion may degenerate into *enthuſiaſm* or madneſs, Buſineſs into rank oppreſſion, and Pleaſure into *vice*:—Every thing may be abuſed. *Virtue*, that *repreſentative* of good to mankind, is ever ready to aſſiſt us, when we call; but ſhe requires the *heart*. Some dreſs her up in a mournful habit, and render her preſence diſpleaſing: this is as great an abſurdity as to repreſent her in the form of a ſilly, giggling girl, who ſtares like an idiot, when you talk to her of being *prudent* and *wiſe*.

M. Some young perſons, as if it were for no better reaſon, than that they are *young*, ſeem to think they have a title to be *fooliſh!*

T. They do not know, that *pain* treads cloſe upon the heels of *pleaſure*. No fooliſh thing delights us long: if we make an imprudent choice, our judgment reproaches us, and we

we nauſeate the object we were eager to graſp: ſhall we, in ſuch inſtances, complain of Providence, or of our want of *prudence?* If we purſue our proper happineſs, through the paths that are marked out to us, the pleaſure we ſhall enjoy, will abundantly compenſate for the pains we may ſuffer. The wiſe and prudent being fortified againſt evil, are prepared for all *encounters*; and are therefore, the moſt capable of rejoicing in all fortunes. They have every thing to hope for, that is *pleaſant* and agreeable to their reaſon; they fear nothing that gives them pain.

M. It muſt be a part of true wiſdom to ſtrengthen the mind againſt ſuffering.

T. This they call *fortitude!* The great object is to avoid offending God. Thoſe who are eager in the chace of *pleaſure*, as confined to their *ſenſes*, or their *fancy*, and ſee but little of their way before them, forſake prudence, and with her they often abandon modeſty, the guide of youth:—they run in a *ſlippery* path, and are often hurled down the precipice of pain and miſery; and when *they cry for help*, there is none to deliver them! O my daughter, liſten to your dear father's words, and be happy! Keep in your eyes the glories of immortality! Be not dazzled with the appearances of *worldly* good, nor violate your *conſcience* to gratify your fancy!

M. You ſeem to ſpeak from your heart, my father!—I hope I ſhall be at leaſt as much on my guard, not to yield up my underſtanding to my paſſions, or not to miſtake *falſe* pleaſure for *true*, as not to take *counters* for *guineas*.

T. It is more difficult to diſtinguiſh, than you ſeem to be aware. In all your purſuits conſider, that HABIT makes *ſinners* or *ſaints*. Carry it conſtantly in mind, that at every age, and in every condition, ſome weakneſs or infirmity is apt to lead us into *ill habits:* and when theſe take root in our temper and inclination, they become a ſecond nature. *That* only to which we are accuſtomed, is generally grateful to us: and yet habit often enſlaves the mind, preventing its freedom of enjoyment in the enlarged fields of reaſon and nature. I mean *ill* habits; for as to *good* ones, reaſon and religion aſſent to them, and the more confirmed *they* are, the more joyful we become.

M. If

M. If we have reſolution enough to make an *early* oppoſition to "the ſin that ſo eaſily beſetteth us;" and turn our thoughts from iniquity, whatever form it may appear in, evil habits cannot prevail againſt us.

T. This is the very thing I recommend: if you *keep* on your guard, you may eaſily diſcover, in what it is you are moſt ſubject to *err*. Every gratification of an ill habit, carries with it its own puniſhment, from the reproach which attends it; and by the anger which it provokes againſt ourſelves.

M. I apprehend it to be dangerous to be much inclined to any thing, but what is clearly a *duty*.

T. Many things are *indifferent*, but not ſo many as is generally imagined. Unleſs we underſtand the tendency of actions, we may be eaſily drawn into an ill habit. In every ſtep, endeavour to eſtabliſh *good* habits, as the *beſt*, if not the only way to *prevent bad ones*. Some things we are ſure are *good*, both with regard to the mind and body: the habit of *prayer*, faith, hope, and charity; a ſweet and gentle temper; patience, long-ſuffering, kindneſs, civility, and ſuch like: theſe increaſe by time, till they grow up into *peace*: their fruit is contentment; and if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, a *habit of happineſs!* but theſe muſt be attended with *temperance* and *chaſtity*, with reſpect to the body. A great part of mankind are ſuch ſlaves to *evil habits*, that they err continually againſt their better judgment. Hurried away by *incontinency and gluttony*, and ſuch *evil* and *deadly practices*, they often fall into *anger*, *pride* or *malice*, *idle talking*, *diſcontent*, *indolence* or *peeviſhneſs*. They depart from virtue ſo far, that they ſeem to be given up to work wickedneſs. Some have a habit of *ſwearing*; others *lie* without remorſe. Wickedneſs generates wickedneſs; and the world is overrun with groſs iniquity!

M. This muſt be owing to their want of reſolution; and that they "love their pleaſures more than they love God!"

T. Moſt certainly: we live in a ſtate of trial. The world is full of a vaſt variety; and we are all apt to be ſuddenly affected. When you ſee a pleaſing or diſpleaſing object; when you ſmell a ſweet or offenſive odour; hear grateful or harſh ſounds; or touch That which is agreeable, or cauſes pain, in

in theſe inſtances your *ſenſes* only are concerned; but your *underſtanding* is equally apprehenſive of what is *pleaſing*, or *diſpleaſing*, good or evil. Nature, in kindneſs to us, hath ordered things in this manner: and it is this which gives the alarm to the heart! *True* pleaſure, or *falſe*, being preſented to us, we have our choice, either of what is good, or what is evil. Hence ariſes our *habits:* and theſe, from whatever cauſe they ſpring, grow into virtues, or become vices. Be watchful to chooſe the good, even in *thought*; for *habit* in *thinking*, is as powerful as in *action*, even ſometimes to turn the brain of poor mortals. It is generally found to be the habit of pride, love, anger, or other paſſion, which overturns reaſon: and the poor frantic wretch raves at the return of the thought, which he had not virtue or ſtrength to ſuppreſs. There is nothing *good* or *evil*, in the extreme, which may not be accompliſhed by habit.

M. I perceive the power and force of habit, with reſpect both to good and evil. But are there not ſome evil habits contracted, which require *time* or *age* to correct and conquer?

T. Alas, my daughter, neither time nor age, are things at our diſpoſal! Nor will common prudence permit us to leave our ſafety to ſo dangerous an iſſue. That which might be eaſily conquered at firſt, often conquers us at laſt. *New faſhions* are often followed, becauſe they are new: *old* ones ſtand firm, like theſe ancient elms, becauſe they are grown ſtrong. Though age may turn the current of our blood, and ſometimes of our thoughts; yet That which we have been accuſtomed to, ſhall, like an armed man, command us which way to go, however reluctant our reaſon may be. If we do not *obey* our *reaſon* while we are *young*, it will loſe its power of *ruling* us when we are *old*. However inclined we may be to *evil*; if our bad inclinations are *curbed*, they will, like a child well nurtured, fearing the nurſe's rod, become patient under controul. Habit grows ſtrong, whilſt we grow weak: and how terrible is the thought of being overcome by evil! Have you read the fable of a crocodile of prodigious ſize and fierceneſs, which frightened all the *Egyptians*, who lived on the banks of the *Nile?* He devoured ſhepherd

and ſheep, herdſmen and cattle: in vain did the people attempt to deſtroy ſo formidable a monſter. In their conſternation, the *Ichneumon* (*a*) ſtepped forth, and gave them this advice: It may be glorious to overcome a great evil; but the wiſeſt way is to *prevent* it. You deſpiſe the crocodile, while he is ſmall and weak, not conſidering, that as he is a long-lived animal, it is his peculiar property to grow as long as he lives. You ſee I am a poor little, feeble creature; yet am I terrible to the crocodile, for I attack him in the egg: and while you are contriving to get the better of *one*, I deſtroy *fifty*.

M. This compariſon is admirably applied, to teach us to exerciſe our ſtrength, however little it may be, before bad habits grow powerful.

T. Well then, do you conſider ſeriouſly what your evil inclinations are! *Good* habits have no pains, no fears, nor ſorrows, but what you will be able to contend with: *Bad* ones have no pleaſures, comforts, or joys, but as they fall in with wicked inclinations: and the misfortune is, that the more theſe are indulged, the greater the mischief becomes.——Now, *Mary*, I will tell you, that young and unexperienced perſons, often acquire *bad habits* of various kinds; yet dream of HAPPINESS: not underſtanding what they mean, nor perceiving how *inconſiſtent* they are, they talk like parrots.

M. Do not people generally talk like parrots, when they ſpeak of happineſs?

T. Is this your opinion? Have *you* thought ſo much about it?

M. You know that it is in every body's mouth; yet, I never met with any one, who could tell me what they would have, only that they would be rich, or be ſomething they were not.

T. Inſtead of ſtudying how to mend their condition by knowledge and virtue. For my own part, I ſometimes wiſh for good ſpirits, better health, and if I could have it for wiſhing, a ſtronger judgment and memory. Joyful benevolence and ſteady hope, alſo appear as eſſential to happineſs, as they are to virtue. Poſſeſſed of ſuch qualities, whether the world ſmil'd or frown'd, methinks *I ſhould be happy!*

M. If

(*a*) A little animal ſo called, remarkable for deſtroying of crocodiles eggs.

M. If you were virtuous and *joyful*, my father, you could not be unhappy.

T. A comfortable ſupport, though it comes from daily *labour*, is neceſſary. Nature is contented with little; and virtue hath the power to make us *happy*.

M. I am ſenſible how much we are obliged to *virtue:* but I believe that when people talk of *happineſs*, they mean little more than *contentment*.

T. The change of day and night, ſummer and winter, *labour* and *reſt*, youth and age, and the hopes which life creates, of pleaſure and profit, make up a great part of happineſs. Theſe conſtitute the variety we are ſo naturally fond of: and which ſome people call happineſs.

M. Will theſe alone render them happy! Do they not wiſh for riches alſo?

T. I have known many, who were in want of nothing, except contentment, and amidſt their *plenty*, were *miſerably poor*; and with all their *knowledge*, ignorant. The advantages juſt mentioned, though common to mortals, ſeldom unite in the ſame perſon: and it is for this reaſon, that but few people are *happy*. You are ſenſible, that he who made us, is no reſpecter of perſons: and therefore, *happineſs* is no where to be found, or it belongs *to us all*. If the good qualities of the mind may be enjoyed by all, it follows, that all have happineſs ſo far within their reach: and ſo much of it as they can graſp, ſo much will they enjoy.—Let every one cultivate this opinion, and make it his purſuit: let him exert his powers to make others as happy as he is able, and men will become the inſtruments of the divine love to all their race. The earth will ſmile around; and Heaven, beholding its image in the human breaſt, will be intereſted in rewarding the ſons of men!

M. My dear father, you open my mind to a much higher ſenſe of *happineſs*, than is uſually entertained! I hope if I were rich, I ſhould not hunt after happineſs in vain!

T. Were you rich, you ſay?—And yet you acknowledge, that God is no reſpecter of perſons! Be careful that the *world* doth not take hold of you! Benevolence and hope, are full of balmy comforts to the ſoul: and whatever our

outward circumſtances may be, they are the beſt remedies to heal the wounds which the mind is ſubject to receive. Were men of good diſpoſitions to wear them upon their foreheads, as well as in their hearts, the ſight would reflect happineſs, as a mirror doth the human face. We ſhould learn to be *comforters*, as well as *monitors*, to each other: we ſhould rejoice, not only in the good poſſeſſed, but in ſo much the brighter proſpect of good in the life to come!

M. It is true, that riches are not neceſſary to benevolence. I think our couſin *Edward*, who is not rich, has the countenance and manners of the perſon you repreſent.

T. He is of an equal mind, and never appears to be diſcontented. Man is naturally a beneficent creature: and the moſt generous part of us, are ſurely the moſt happy: theſe ſeem to be rich, in proportion as others poſſeſs riches, and as themſelves communicate comfort. Our happineſs, *Mary*, ſhould be founded on a rock, which no ſtratagem of vice, nor raging billow of adverſity can undermine.

M. How ſhall we accompliſh ſo great a work?

T. I am talking like a philoſopher. But you will grant, that man, who lives in ſociety, cannot be happy, without the kindneſs of others. Let them be all *unkind*, and what are riches or honours? Let us endeavour to make each other happy, *we ſurely ſhall be ſo.* He that both receives, and gives with a good grace, is happy in a double capacity. The beſt inſtruction which I can give you upon this ſubject, is to apply your whole ſtrength, when the occaſion requires it, to keep your thoughts calm and unruffled.

M. This can only be the reward of virtue: That it is a preparative for happineſs, is obvious.

T. As ſuch I mean it; convinced as I am, that let fortune claim what relation ſhe will, *virtue* is the parent of happineſs, as *peace* is the companion of *virtue.* If you reſolve to be happy, you muſt reſolve to be virtuous.

M. If we could be happy by *reſolving to be virtuous*, we ſhould have no complaints of the want of happineſs.

T. Reſolving to be virtuous, goes a great way in oppoſing human frailty: therefore I give it as my ſtrict injunction, Reſolve to be virtuous: for this in effect is reſolving to ſhun

miſery.

miſery. It would be equally abſurd for you to ſay, I will be happy, in ſpite of virtue, as I will be happy, and yet indulge myſelf in vice.

M. I believe it is impoſſible to be vicious and happy!

T. Nothing can be more contrary to the nature of things, or in other words, to the decrees of Heaven, than *happineſs without virtue.* The vicious may *ſeem* to be happy, but they certainly are not ſo.

M. A peaceful conſcience, and a *pleaſant temper*, are the rewards of *virtue.*

T. A diſturbed mind is but another word for miſery: and where ſhall we find a *pleaſant temper*, with an *unquiet conſcience?* or *happineſs*, without a *pleaſant temper? God* is the fountain of happineſs; and *hope* the ſtream, at which he bids us drink to ſatisfy our thirſt: this is our comfort! Religion teaches us the various duties of *this life*; and the performance of them, as naturally inſpires the heart with *hope* and comfort, and expectation of happineſs in the *life to come.*

M. The moſt glorious object of hope, is the happineſs of the *future ſtate.*

T. In the ordinary courſe of Providence, we are ever ſubject to ſuffer, and be rendered, what we vulgarly call *unhappy:* the follies and iniquities of others, if not our own, will make us ſo: but by the ſame laws of Heaven, we find, that *virtue* has the power of covering her friends, as it were, with an impenetrable ſhield; and ſhe guards them from the arrows, with which *misfortune* ſo often wounds us. Thus, if not in *preſent* enjoyment; in proſpect, ſhe uniformly preſents happineſs to our view. Try the experiment: the nearer you approach her, the faſter ſhe will meet you: ſhe will give you ſuch a foretaſte of *future joys*, as conſtitutes an eſſential part of *preſent happineſs.* This ſeems to be the moſt that mortals uſually arrive at: this every one may compaſs: and therefore I preſume, this is the *happineſs* which we often talk of, and ſo little underſtand.

M. Do you not think that health and fortune have a conſiderable ſhare in our happineſs?

T. It *ſeems* to be, as you imagine: health is the gift of God;—*fortune*, when properly employed, contributes her ſhare;

ſhare; but you are ſenſible that both may be *abuſed*. *Fortune* cannot be enjoyed by *all*; yet *happineſs* you grant is common to *all*: therefore fortune is not eſſential to *happineſs*; though food and raiment, and ſhelter from the ſky, are neceſſary to *life*. We often ſee people with a ſlender ſhare of health, by the force of virtue, enjoy a conſiderable portion of happineſs: whilſt others, the *more health* they enjoy, the more exceſſes they commit.

M. This is true.

T. If you acknowledge this to be true of *health*, it holds much ſtronger of *fortune*. I am ſure there are many, who the more riches they have, the worſe lives they lead.

M. What have you learnt from books on this ſubject?

T. I believe we had better conſult our own hearts, than the hearts of other men, who may have written books, without knowing experimentally more than we do. Would you aſk any body, whether you are happy or not? Philoſophers have agreed to give this ſhort verdict, *that happineſs muſt be ſought in a ſound mind, in a ſound body.* The firſt part is obvious enough, for a ſound mind implies *virtue*, but a ſound body doth *not include riches nor fortune.* In proportion as the body is unſound, ſo as to *diſtemper* the mind, in the degree of That diſtemper, will the man be rendered incapable of happineſs.

M. No body can diſpute this. Many, who are not confined for lunacy, ſeem to act as if they had loſt their wits.

T. They loſe them, when they do not uſe them, or employ them improperly. The *power of enjoyment*, ſeems to be according to the *ſtrength of our reaſon*, this being directed right. If an *unſound mind* cannot produce happineſs; an *unſound mind*, in an *unſound body*, certainly cannot produce it: but thank Heaven, a ſound mind is often found where the body is much decayed. We alſo find that Nature is ſo kind to us, that in the body, the change from pain to eaſe and relief, gives ſo quick a ſenſibility of pleaſure, that in ſome unhappy circumſtances, it conſtitutes, for the time it laſts, ſuch quiet and ſatisfaction, that we give it the name of happineſs. Permanent, uninterrupted felicity, is ſomething ſo good, that we are happy when we *think* of it: but when we conſider where and what

it

it is, how difficult to be acquired, and how much it depends on *virtue*, we are obliged to recur to her: her favour, and the contemplation of her charms, can alone fill up the measure of the desires of the human soul! I advise you, *Mary*, to find out the *secret*, how to be at ease: for *ease* will gently lead you into the knowledge how to make the best of the enjoyments that life is capable of: and that is the most we can make of happiness, were we to reason upon it till doomsday. Change the name, and *ease* is so far *happiness!*

M. Happiness then, is to be found in a degree, which you call *ease*, and beyond this it is hard to find where it dwells; yet, if we seek for it in the habitations of virtue, the very search becomes a happiness; as a sensibility of *good actions*, accompanied with *good intentions*, quiets our minds, and makes us satisfied with ourselves.

T. My dear child, you seem to understand this matter, as well as the *learned men*, whose books I have read. Every one can tell you, at least for the present moment, whether he enjoys ease or not: and if he is at ease, it is presumed that he is *contented*; and consequently, what we vulgarly call *happy*. Contentment is so far the *representative* of happiness, that without it happiness is but a name!

M. I suppose that *moderation* in prosperity, is necessary, as well as strength to support ourselves manfully under affliction.

T. Without these, *misery* will ensue. This is agreeable to the common notions we have of virtue. To indulge any passion in the *extreme*, is being *vicious*.

M. Do you think there is any man living so happy, as not to have tasted the cup of sorrow?

T. I believe none.

M. The fewer our sorrows, and the purer our hearts, the happier we must needs be, upon the comparison with other men.

T. Then you think that happiness is to be judged of by *comparison*. I believe it is: we may venture to say, that the more perfect we are, the happier we are:—Still at the best we are frail mortals! Charity and love to our fellow-creatures, naturally call forth so much the greater sensibility: they excite our tender passions, and awaken our sympathies. Religion acts

in conſort with them, and chooſes out their proper objects; but where can great ſenſibility be, without great ſuffering?

M. Then you make happineſs, but a mixed ſtate of pleaſure and pain.

T. Indeed I believe it is ſo, *Mary!* This appears to be the condition of human life. The very notion of a ſtate of trial, ſeems to imply ſo much. Reaſon requires the regulation of our paſſions, but never yet recommended the extinction of them. Thoſe who do not conſider *contentment* as the chief ingredient in the compoſition of their cup, I am afraid will not reliſh life as they ought to do. There muſt be degrees in contentment: perhaps the higheſt of theſe, is what we call *happineſs*.

M. We know, at leaſt, what we mean by *contentment*.

T. Yes: but the *word* does not pleaſe us ſo well, as *happineſs*. If we ſay, that happineſs is the contrary to miſery, ſo is *contentment*. If we ſay, that happineſs depends on opinion, there is ſomething in the notion of *contentment*, more fixed and laſting than *opinion*. We imagine, that we ſhall find happineſs in this object, or in that: and the *hopes* that we ſhall find it, makes us ſo much the more contented.

M. Then happineſs conſiſts chiefly in *hope*. Doth not *opinion* depend upon the compariſon of the condition and enjoyments of different men?

T. I believe it does: but opinion often makes a falſe eſtimate of ſuch conditions. We generally reckon without our hoſt; and are mighty apt to forget, that the greateſt difference in the *conditions* of men, is the greater or leſs portion of the ſenſe and virtue which they poſſeſs: and to judge of this, is a difficult taſk. It requires much candour and ſtrength of underſtanding to judge of ourſelves; and ſtill more of other people.

M. Then we muſt *come back to virtue*. By *condition*, I mean the different degrees of wealth and grandeur, which we ſee in the world.

T. Wealth and grandeur are *pretty play things* to paſs away thirty or forty years. You remember what I told you of a great man on his death-bed (*a*). Men's notions of happineſs, as

(*a*) Page 221.

as derived from ſuch things, are as variable and inconſtant as the things themſelves. They glitter ſo much in the eyes of ſome poor mortals, as to make them believe the poſſeſſor *happy:* but juſt as well may we ſuppoſe, that all who *are not* in theſe circumſtances, are *miſerable*, which is ſo contrary to common-ſenſe and experience, that every child finds out the fallacy of ſuch a judgment. I grant, that the opinion in favour of riches, takes ſuch faſt hold of the greater part of us, we cannot diſpoſſeſs ourſelves of the thought, that becauſe they can purchaſe ſo many *good things*, they can purchaſe *happineſs*. But did you ever hear that *health* or *virtue*, without which no one is happy, could be *bought?* Here the deluſion is flagrant; and we diſcover, that thoſe who ſee things in this light, are bad judges of happineſs.

M. I am anſwered: I perceive that it is not in the power of *fortune* alone, to make me happy.

T. But it is in the power of *vice* to make you *miſerable*. Do you remember the fable?—According to this, *Fortune* and *Vice* had once a violent conteſt. *Fortune* boaſted that ſhe could take from men every external good, and bring upon them every external evil. Be it ſo, replied *Vice:* but this is by no means ſufficient to make them miſerable, without *my* aſſiſtance: whereas, without *yours*, I am able to render them completely ſo. Nay, in ſpite of all *your* endeavours to make them happy."——

M. Vice may ſurely do miſchief without end, but *ſhe* can do no *real* good to mankind.

T. This hath been the voice of all ages, in which we hear of any moral philoſophy.—In regard to happineſs, the lives of mankind conſiſting of a mixture of pleaſure and pain, joy and grief, the advice of the Apoſtle is, " If you are *ſorrowful*, pray;" appeal to heaven for relief: " if you are *glad*, ſing pſalms." In all fortunes, forget not the hand that made you: forget not that he who mourns to-day, may rejoice to-morrow; ſo quick are the changes and events of life. Thoſe who are wiſe, whether rich or poor, are ſo fully ſenſible of this truth, that the one learns to ſhun pride and inſolence; and the other, to avoid melancholy and deſpair: and whilſt habit and cuſtom make the plenty of the one *indifferent* to him, the *poverty* of the other will become no leſs familiar.

M. What have you obſerved in great families, with regard to *their* happineſs?

T. They have as much of it, as *modes*, and *forms*, and *ceremonies*, *dreſs*, *equipage*, *great quantities of ſuperfluous food*, *and a great number of ſuperfluous ſervants*, can furniſh. As they live at a great expence, they look forward to the *fortunes* of their children, as ſuppoſing theſe will conſtitute the greateſt part of their happineſs. *Bliſs to come*, *Mary*, is ever taken into the *preſent* account of our enjoyments, proving how naturally the ſoul longs for ſomething this world cannot give! And becauſe the *great* depend ſo much on fortune, and, if I may preſume to ſay it, ſo little on reaſon and nature, their *cup* is more ſubject to be imbittered than ours, which does not require a tenth part ſo many ingredients.

M. Can this be true!

T. Do you conſider, that altho' we live from hand to mouth, we find ourſelves at eaſe when we have the few enjoyments which Nature points out: whereas, they are accuſtomed to think, as I have juſt told you, that a large ſupply of the goods of fortune, is abſolutely neceſſary to their well-being.

M. I always thought they depended more upon their *fancy*, than we do, and are not ſo much the children of Providence.

T. They certainly do not put themſelves ſo much under the care of Providence; for ſick or well, their *rents* are paid. *We* ſeek for happineſs in *contentment* and *induſtry*; and therefore may find it more eaſily, than thoſe who ſeek it in *grandeur:* the fewer enjoyments people are accuſtomed to, the leſs will be the number of their *wants*.

M. Suppoſing contentment to be equal in the rich and poor, ſhould you not eſteem the *rich* man as the moſt happy?

T. *Hope* being a pleaſant paſſion, and *fear* a painful one; as the poor man hath the moſt hopes, and the rich the moſt fears, I doubt whether the greater anxiety, joined to the greater number of temptations to exceſs, may not be a heavier drawback on him, than his riches an advantage.—This ſeems to depend much on the turn of the mind; and be it as it may, let the rich remember, that every thing relating to *wealth*, is unſtable; *riches* oftentimes making themſelves wings, where wings are not made for them.—How

many

many BANKRUPTCIES, have I ſeen in my time!—Some the effect of misfortune; more of living too high; and a greater number by over-trading, and the ambition of gain.—And what is the conſequence? Many others, who are innocent, are involved; ſome thrown down from the heights of affluence, into the depths of poverty. There is alſo reaſon to apprehend, that effects are ſometimes concealed, and the vileſt thefts committed under the ſanction of bankrupts being relieved by the laws from all undue oppreſſion: ſuppoſing that the perſon failing, does ſtrict juſtice in delivering up *his all*, *mercy* is due to him!

M. Such thefts are abominable, indeed! Can any ſuch ill-gotten riches proſper in the hands of the poſſeſſor?

T. What the laws of the land cannot reach to, nor diſcover, is left of courſe to the juſtice of Heaven: and let the unjuſt tremble at the thought!—But conſider, *Mary*, that the higheſt ſplendor which riches can furniſh, whether in houſes, clothes, or equipage, are mere *play-things*; and ſometimes diſagreeable incumbrances. They exhibit no ſhew, comparable to the glory of the heavens and earth! Diamonds, paintings, ſtatues, the moſt expenſive magnificence, can only be *ſeen* by the poſſeſſor; other people may *ſee* them alſo, but they are not common, as the face of nature, which is yet more beautiful, when improved by the hand of induſtry; and for this reaſon, they are not ſo good, nor do they produce ſuch real happineſs. A certain wiſe man, and great lawgiver, in the higheſt eſteem among the *Athenians* (*a*), being aſked by one of the richeſt kings of ancient times (*b*), which of mankind, in all his travels, he had found the moſt *truly happy:* he anſwered, a certain good man (*c*), a citizen of *Athens*; and gave this reaſon for his opinion: "He lived all his days without want; ſaw his country flouriſh; had virtuous children in univerſal eſteem; and after ſeeing his children's children, died glorioufly in battle, fighting for his country.

M. This was a *philoſopher's* happy man.

T. It would be yours too, if you knew as much of the world as I do.——*He wanted nothing!*

(*a*) *Solon.* (*b*) *Cræſus*, king of *Lydia.* (*c*) *Tellus.*

M. I do not ſay, my father, that I differ with you; but rather wiſh to form my mind to juſt notions of happineſs,—But what ſhall we ſay, when thoſe whom we know to be *vicious*, appear to be *happy?*

T. Appear to be happy!—They may *appear* to be what they are not: and we are ſure it is not their *vice* which makes them happy, if they are ſo. That portion of virtue which they poſſeſs, for few men are without ſome ſhare, may give them ſome joyful days: and the virtue of *other people*, may contribute yet more. One thing is certain, that if we *do not* believe in a future ſtate of *rewards* and *puniſhments*, our proſpect muſt be *gloomy*, and therefore *unhappy*; as all our enjoyments muſt be bounded by a precarious life. If we *do* believe in ſuch ſtate, then is life rendered pleaſing by our hopes in *future good:* and this brings us back to our dependance on *virtue*, or *religion*, not on *fortune.*

M. Indeed, life being at beſt ſo very ſhort and uncertain; and the belief of an after-account ſo ſtrong and unconquerable, your argument carries its own proof in favour of virtue.

T. In regard to the ordinary conſequences of vice, particularly when ſupported by a large fortune, we are ſure that gluttony, drunkenneſs, and incontinency, naturally create pain of body, if not ſorrow of mind, and ſhorten life: covetouſneſs, inſtead of rendering men the darlings of human kind, makes them hated as *enemies:* prodigality renders them contemptible: pride, ſwoln with preſumption, is deteſtable: anger in a ſtorm of rage, is terrible: fear, trembling at every joint, painful and unmanly: vanity, with her ſilly train, is ever treated with diſdain: ambition, burning in the heart, is no leſs at enmity with the repoſe of man: revenge, holding up her dagger, yet reaking with blood, how can ſhe be welcome to the heart of man? Can theſe, or any vicious properties, in rich or poor, promote happineſs?—Will the wiſe, the beneficent, merciful Lord of all, ſuffer that qualities ſo repugnant to the intereſt of mankind, ſhall render the poſſeſſors happy?—On the other ſide, behold *charity* and *humility*, *meekneſs* and *kindneſs!* Survey them well! Obſerve how all this ſmiling train, diſpenſe comfort and peace among the ſuffering children of the human race!—Now judge you,

Mary,

Mary, where you would *ſeek for happineſs*, and where it may moſt probably be found!

M. It is very obvious, that whatever portion of happineſs is permitted to man, in this ſtate of trial, it can poſſibly ariſe only from obedience to the decrees of Heaven.

T. Do you not perceive that every kind of exceſs, and every ungovernable paſſion, ſows diſcord or confuſion in the world: and what can the harveſt be but *miſery?* We muſt ſeek for happineſs, in generoſity, humility, and meekneſs, in manly truſt in God, and in compaſſion to our fellow-creatures: this we muſt do, or give up the purſuit. In appearance, many an offender enjoys every gratification, without controul; he flouriſhes like the willow on the waters banks: but the tree will wither ſoon; it will decay, or be torn up by the hand of violence; for violence generates violence: and where *can* there be gratifications forbidden by the laws of God, without injury to men? The juſt and the unjuſt are ſubject to fall, from various cauſes: but do not vainly imagine, that what pleaſes the fancy will make you happy; it is *virtue*, it is the forbearance of a merciful God, which ſuſtains us, and points out the way to reſt. Both worlds are linked: the chain goes on. As to this, how often hath the ſmiles of fortune flattered the child of wealth!—and whilſt they flattered, ſtung him to the heart! Perhaps, inſenſible of the ſnares around him, he has gone through a whole ſcene of iniquity, one evil action leading to another; and the laſt ſtill calling for relief from ſome unwarrantable or expenſive gratification; till at length, it hath amounted to ſuch a ſum of debt, or guilt and folly, as ſunk him with anguiſh to the grave!

M. I grant, that there are *many* caſes, in which the poor are the leaſt expoſed to become unhappy in the extreme!

T. That is beſt for us all, which is moſt agreeable to infinite wiſdom. If we look through the ſhades of virtuous poverty, gloomy as they ſometimes are, ſtill we behold, with the eye of faith, the tender Father of mankind, diſcharging the promiſes made to his children: and what are theſe?—Do they not eclipſe all the dazzling brightneſs of *their* condition, who have only *wealth* to recommend them? You may eaſily comprehend how it comes to paſs, that we ſo often judge ill;

and why we are tempted to murmur againſt Providence. Our murmurs proclaim our *vice*, and our vices take off the vail, and diſcover our miſery? The Almighty hath declared himſelf to be in a more peculiar manner, the God, the ſovereign, the father, and the friend of the poor; provided they are dutiful on their part. And all the happineſs promiſed to the rich, are made upon *this* condition, that *they* too ſhall be his inſtruments, as the friends, the advocates, and protectors of the poor: and they only *are* truly happy *who remember this condition!* From hence muſt ſpring their preſent joy, as built on the hope of bliſs eternal.

M. Still it comes to the ſame point, that *virtue*, in all conditions, conſtitutes happineſs, and *vice* miſery; though it appears to me, that we often judge raſhly, and without knowing what is paſſing in the heart of man.

T. You eaſily comprehend, that God who made the heart, framed it ſo, that the *happineſs* he means we ſhall enjoy, ſhall depend upon our *duty:* and though all the ways of Heaven are not the objects of our comprehenſion, yet we may trace, in this inſtance, that happineſs keeps pace with *hope:* and is a *ſure* and *certain reference* to that ſtate, which adjuſts all the inequalities we now ſee. We could have no ſatisfaction in ſtanding upon this charming ſpot of earth, if the proſpect before our eyes were ſad and dreary; and if in our way home, we were obliged to paſs over burning brick-kilns, through darkſome paths, untrod by *mortal* foot, o'er ſands or rocks, by precipices deep and horrible! We know that all is ſmooth and pleaſant; and are *happy* in our preſent ſituation. If *all may be happy*, the *compariſon* of the various ſtations appointed by Providence, is out of the queſtion.

M. You believe that there can be no ſuch creature upon earth, as a *happy vicious man:* but may there not be a completely *miſerable virtuous one?*

T. No: I have told you that *virtue* will not, in my opinion, admit of complete miſery: if our calamities are not great, we may ſuſtain them manfully; if they are great, they will make an end of us by *death:* and in either caſe, virtue will triumph, and our end be glorious! The wiſeſt mere man that we read of, was *Solomon:* he aſked for *wiſdom* as his ſupreme good, or

higheſt

higheſt happineſs: and if I were brought to the ſevereſt teſt, could I ſay, that the *higheſt happineſs* conſiſteth in riches, long-life, and the applauſe of men? I ſhould be an arrant knave, if I gave this ſentence againſt my better reaſon. Happineſs muſt reſult from truſt in the favour of God: That man is the *moſt happy*, who is *moſt in ſuch favour!* In early ages, mankind entertained an opinion that happineſs was to be ſought in ſome diſtant region, and not where they ſaw ſuch ſcenes of miſery abound, as in this world. Though unenlightened by any *Chriſtian revelation*, they imagined, that the greateſt favourites of Heaven, were the moſt happy of the children of men; and that thoſe were the greateſt favourites, who were ſlain by *lightning*, preſuming that this was an expreſs commiſſion from the great Father of mankind, to remove them from hence, without the pain and ſorrow they might otherwiſe ſuffer in ſuch a world as this. They, ſo far like us, believed in the *immortality of the ſoul*; and concluded, that true happineſs is not to be found on this ſide the grave. *We Chriſtians* do not preſume to determine, that people to whom ſuch accidents happen, had therefore the more virtue: we call them *unhappy*, on a ſuppoſition, that of all bleſſings, *life* is the greateſt: but this is rather a mode of expreſſing compaſſion, than a ſteady principle; for at the ſame moment we acknowledge, that the greateſt kindneſs of Providence, is to grant us a *happy death*, let it come in what ſhape it may: for what is the language of reaſon and experience? What doth the Chriſtian ſay, whoſe heart is devoted to his Saviour? "*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his!*" This is the prayer of every good man: He lives prepared! Death can be *ſudden*, in the evil ſenſe, only to thoſe who are unprepared for it.

M. Your reflexions bring to my mind the Providence of God, in the ſtory of a virtuous pair, who were killed by lightning, as they were at harveſt work. I have almoſt forgotten the circumſtances: do you remember them?

T. Their names were *John Hewet*, and *Sarah Drew*; and they lived at *Stanton-Harcourt*. They were diſtinguiſhed in the country, for their good tempers and virtuous inclinations, which created a mutual affection. All the neighbours ſpoke

of

of their loves with kindneſs and reſpect: he had already bought a ribband for her hat, and choſen the poeſy for her ring: the conſent of their parents was obtained, and the day of their nuptials appointed. They were in the field at harveſt-work, on the laſt day of *July* (*a*), when the clouds grew black, and a ſtorm enſued, which drove the harveſt-people to the beſt ſhelter they could find. The thunder roared with a frightful noiſe, and ſhook the very arch of heaven, and the lightning darted forth its flames. *Sarah* fell down in a ſwoon, on a heap of barley. *John* immediately raked together two or three heaps, endeavouring to ſecure her from the ſtorm; and laying one arm about her neck, the other was held out, as if he meant to ſcreen her from the lightning. In this poſture they were both ſtruck dead. When the ſtorm abated, the harveſt-people called to each other, but no voice came from theſe faithful lovers: they went to the ſpot, and found them *dead!*

M. Alas, my father! were *they* the *favourites* of Heaven?

T. Surely they died in virtuous love!—One of *Sarah*'s eye-brows was ſinged, and there appeared a black ſpot on her breaſt: *John*'s body was all over black. You may eaſily imagine the grief that ſeized their companions at this doleful ſight! They carried the bodies home, and the next day buried them in one grave, a ſtone being laid over them, mentioning their characters, and the cauſe of their death. Thus ended the lives of an honeſt, induſtrious young man and maid! Their virtues were thus ſecured to them, beyond the poſſibility of any falling-off, or of being expoſed to any conteſt with ſickneſs, poverty, or pain! Heaven, in approbation of perſons, whoſe hearts were ſo ſincere, might, as *far* as we know, thus determine to *ſecure* to them an *endleſs* ſtate of immortal happineſs, inſtead of *That* which they fondly imagined they ſhould enjoy in the poſſeſſion of each other. What could they have had, but a ſhort period of a precarious life, and a ſhorter and more precarious ſtate of happineſs?

M. Heaven is gracious in all its purpoſes! Yet, my father, it was a ſad misfortune, thus to be cut off in the bloſſom of their hopes!

T. In

(*a*) 1718.

T. In the common notions of mankind, you ſay right; it muſt needs be conſidered as a mournful event: but if we mean to talk *common ſenſe*, and not contradict ourſelves, we ſhall draw one of theſe concluſions; either they were not *a virtuous pair*, as repreſented; they would have become vicious; or laſtly, they were really and truly good.

M. But might they not have been *more virtuous?*

T. Why more virtuous? If they were *then* good to the degree of being a fit offering to Heaven, and might have turned out ill, was it not a great mercy, that they died? Such events are called *misfortunes*; by which we mean, that we who live, are ſorry when deprived of good people: but what is this to them who die in the arms of virtue? We know not what was intended by That God, without whoſe permiſſion, not a ſparrow falls! The happineſs of perſons who thus, as *we* term it, fall untimely, may fall in happy time for them! The ſame wiſe man that I mentioned (*a*), being aſked, who was next happy, in his opinion, to the father who died fighting, and whoſe children were ſo good; he anſwered, two brothers (*b*), whoſe duty for their mother was ſo diſtinguiſhed, that the oxen which were to draw her to the temple, not being ready upon a great occaſion, they put themſelves in the yoke, and drew the chariot five miles. The mother in a tranſport of pleaſure, prayed that they might be rewarded with the greateſt favour that Heaven beſtows on mortals: and accordingly her ſons falling aſleep in the temple, there died in a ſoft and pleaſing ſlumber.

M. Theſe ſtories are ſtriking proofs of the ſenſe of mankind, with regard to happineſs in a life to come!

T. And how common a ſhare of piety and virtue, may ſometimes immortalize a name: for the ſtory ſays, the people (*c*) conſecrated ſtatues to them, and ſet them up in their temple (*d*).

M. You almoſt make me think an early death the readieſt way to happineſs.

T. It may be ſo: but here the ſhort-ſighted mortal appears: how can we tell? The love of life is engrafted into our frame,

(*a*) p. 459.
(*b*) Cleobis and Bitou.
(*c*) Of *Argos*.
(*d*) Temple of *Delphos*.

and it is the higheſt affront to the Giver, to wiſh for the means of getting quit of it; much more to deſtroy it by our own hands. You need not be apprehenſive, whilſt you are virtuous, that you will long for the end of life: on the contrary, you will rejoice: and if you are not virtuous, you will wiſh for *time* to *repent!* You will *fear* to go to your laſt account, with your ſins in bloſſom! You will rather ſtrive to lengthen life, in hopes to cut up your ſins by the root.—By ſuch means, you might ſtill hope for happineſs in this world; and leave the event of death in the hands of the great Arbitrer of life and death, where only it belongs. Death will come, when it doth not pleaſe Heaven to prevent it: and of all ſins, the greateſt is to bring it ſooner. As we believe in the general providence of God, we muſt conclude, that the happineſs of mortals is in his hands; and that we cannot meaſure it, but as we take in the *time paſt*, and the *time to come*, as well as the *preſent period* of our exiſtence.

M. Do you think there are PARTICULAR PROVIDENCES, with regard to the happineſs or miſery of particular men in this world?

T. If the laws of Providence in general, and the operations of Almighty Power, whether in the natural, or moral world, are paſt finding out, in their full extent, it ſeems to be equally fooliſh and preſumptuous to pry into the ſecrets of Heaven; how far it pleaſeth God to ſhew diſtinguiſhed mercy and favour, to particular perſons, at particular times, for any wiſe deſign, the end of which is known only to Him. As ſurely as there is a God, he delights in the virtue of mankind: Such virtue is in *their* choice; but the reward is in *his* hand: He, who is the God of all Nature, ſheweth mercy in all the various ways which ſeem good to his infinite wiſdom and compaſſion. What have we poor mortals to do, but fall down in humble adoration? Self-preſervation is the firſt law: for this we are *commanded* to pray, whether in *happineſs*, or in *miſery*. "Seek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you." In what particular manner we ſhall *find*; or *how* it is opened, ſtill reſts upon the wiſdom of the great Ruler of the world.

M. Do

M. Do only Chriſtians pray, as if they believed in a *particular providence?*

T. I underſtood from my maſter, that the *Mahometans* are yet more inclined to prayer: and whatever their notions may be concerning the events of this life, they acknowledge their dependance on God; the neceſſity of moral duties; and believe in a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death, according to their conduct in this life. To be *good*, is our firſt concern. Angels are confeſſedly happier than men, becauſe they are ſo much better. As reaſoning creatures, our happineſs depends on *our thoughts:* we agree that opinion makes a great part.

M. I am convinced, that thoſe who think themſelves *miſerable*, are really ſo.

T. As our opinion or judgment of our own ſtate and condition is true or falſe, ſo will our happineſs or miſery generally be. We muſt, however, obſerve our duty to God, and our neighbour, otherwiſe we can never feel within our own boſom, that ſweet *complacency*, to which we ſo deſervedly give the *name of happineſs.*

M. I have remarked, that ſome people are ſo weak-minded, they make themſelves miſerable; as if they had not ſenſe enough to be happy.

T. Your obſervation is true: In the mean time, Eternal Juſtice, with an equal hand, weighs the actions of men. He that ſheweth mercy, and promoteth the happineſs of his fellow-creatures; to him will mercy be ſhewn, and his happineſs promoted. He who, through want of mercy, embitters another's cup; ſooner or later will the ſame ingredients be thrown into his. This ſeems to be the ordinary diſpenſation of Providence, though the contrary ſometimes *appears.*

M. You think thoſe the moſt happy, who contribute the largeſt ſhare to the happineſs of others: and yet, that the more we are engaged in doing good, the more miſery we uſually ſee: and that this deſtroys a great part of the pleaſure. There can be, then, no ſuch thing as happineſs, even to thoſe who are the greateſt friends to mankind!

T. Not ſo, *Mary:* for although this evil chequers life with a portion of miſery; yet ſtill the quickeſt joys ariſe from

doing good. When the great Benefactor of mankind arrived on earth, angels ſang *Hallelujahs*: and what was the ſubject of them? "Glory be to God on high! In earth, peace! Good-will to man!"—Yet, the ſufferings of the Son of God, were ſuch as no language can deſcribe! He pointed out the way to heavenly happineſs, by bidding us to be as merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. The ſame divine perſon commands us, not to ſet *our affections* on things on the earth, but on heavenly things: and the reaſon given is obvious. The things of the earth paſs away and are gone, and the place of human happineſs or miſery is known no more. Not ſo the things of heaven; theſe are as permanent as eternity! *He* could not err; for in *his* breaſt eternal wiſdom ſat enthroned! We muſt *bear the evil*, and *cheriſh the good part of life!*

M. The love of God, and the love of man, thus meeting in the ſame point, you open my mind to ſuch a ſenſe of the great law of the Chriſtian world, as enraptures my heart. I perceive what love, and peace, and harmony lodge in the boſom of our religion!

T. If men were truly ſenſible what charms there are in ſuch divine philoſophy, they would be more like angels: and though it is eaſily diſcoverable, that *complete happineſs* is not attainable on this ſide the grave, yet we may find the peace which the world, without religion, cannot give: and that we might be incomparably more happy than we are!

M. Upon the whole, I ſhall expect to find *eaſe* and *peace*, in the degree that I lead a virtuous life; rather comforting myſelf *now*, with the hopes of *future* joys, than preſuming upon ſo much ſatisfaction in this world, as to call it *happineſs*.

T. Here you may ſafely reſt: and according to your own deciſion, give your ſoul repoſe. You, *Mary*, to whom I am ſo old an acquaintance, will not be ſurprized, that my diſcourſe is tinctured ſo much with religion. When I look back, as a ſpectator of the *great world*, and conſider ſo many eminent men, whoſe perſons I have ſeen, and who made a conſiderable figure on the ſtage of life, now forgotten; were I not a believer in *Chriſt*, there would ſeem to be nothing ſubſtantial in life. It would appear to be a mere ſhadow, an actor that ſtruts and hectors, or mourns and bathes the

cheeks

cheeks in tears, for a poor hour or two, and then is heard no more! When we turn the mind's eye, and view our *immortal ſtate*, the ſcene is changed: the ſun ſhines forth in glory: we feel his kindly warmth and influence: *hope* drives away all that is ſad and gloomy, reſtoring *peace* with all her charms! The nearer this poor play of life draws to an end, the brighter the proſpect; the ſoul, ſo long confined from her proper home, gladdens at the thought of the approaching ſcene of new delight!

M. Do you feel it ſo, my father? I believe the bulk of mankind find their thoughts tied to this world, even when the flame of life is juſt expiring!

T. So it is, where reaſon or religion fails, which too often happens: But if men were conſiſtent with themſelves, and did not falter in their faith, allowing for the natural abhorrence of death, and the *cuſtom* of being afraid of it, we ſhould ſee more *heroiſm* in the world, and more conſiſtency of conduct. We *believe*, or *not believe*: the way to convince ourſelves that we believe, is to act as if we did, ſtill praying to Heaven to help out the deficiency.—I am ſenſible of the juſtneſs of your remark; but would gladly think well of mankind, and rather flatter the native greatneſs of the mind, than the acquired baſeneſs of it. To tell a man, that he *can* do a great action, is to make him do it. To attempt to convince him, that he is a daſtardly, inſignificant wretch, not worth hanging, may make him an arrant knave: for reputation is one great prop of virtue, in our ſocial ſtate. Such is the mind, and ſo much depends on ſociety, and the encouragement of each other in acts of generoſity.

M. I have ſeen this reduced into practice: not in the great concern of *happy dying*, but in kind actions, and *happy living*.

T. For this reaſon, ſuch of the clergy as tell us, we are nothing, *nothing but vileneſs*, do wrong: for if we were nothing elſe, what ſignifies their preaching? For my own part, I have long found my poor bark toſſed about in a tempeſtuous ocean; but I never loſt my compaſs, and always found ſafe anchoring-ground in religion. Where *are* the thoughts of man to reſt? What can be the reſult of the moſt active life, or the moſt

moſt benevolent diſpoſition? The great Author of our Being, hath revealed his will through *Chriſt:* his decree is, that if we obey his laws, though we muſt all lie down at the appointed time, we ſhall break the ſhackles of mortality, and riſe again to immortal happineſs! This is the Chriſtian's faith; leſs ſubject to be ſhaken than the rocks, whoſe foundations are laid in the depths of this firm-ſet earth: they ſhall melt away in fervent heat, and this ſubſtantial maſs be all diſſolved: but the *ſoul* can *never periſh!* Let this conſideration be the chief object of your preſent happineſs, and you will, with the greater alacrity, perform every moral and ſocial duty.

M. My father, I ſhould be moſt truly ſurprized, if you did not build your notions of happineſs, on the foundation of your belief in the immortality of the ſoul! I hear you with joy, and I feel the effects which you deſcribe. Such, indeed, is not the ordinary diſcourſe of the world; but therefore yours is the more valuable. The moſt thoughtleſs muſt think at laſt; the moſt careleſs muſt apply their hearts to the contemplation of religion; or, ſo far from finding true happineſs, they will periſh!

T. Every diſcharge of duty, renders the approach of death, a more confirmed expectancy of happineſs. This *expectation* ſhould be ſo much the ſtronger, as it advances nearer: The proſpect of happineſs in this world retires before us, as the world itſelf, with reſpect to ourſelves, is ending; and it is as ſelf-evident, that no man can be happy, in this life, who doth not always ſubmit gracefully to the thought of his diſſolution: this makes us *eaſy* for the ſhort time we live. If he is fearful of being torn from the world, inſtead of reſigning it, and doth not give himſelf up into the hands of his Maker, *can he be happy?* Let him think how to reeeive the meſſage with joy, not reject the mercy; for ſurely, *God* is as merciful in our *death*, as in our *life!* How often is it apparently a mercy to die!—It is *always* a mercy, ſeeing that death muſt come, when we think of it with complacency!

M. So it ſhould be, otherwiſe we muſt be miſerable: for "in the midſt of life we are in death:" and to whom can we fly from the arrows of mortality?—You think ſo juſtly, I conſider you, my father, as having been happy all

your

your life: you ſeem indifferent about living: yet, by applying yourſelf ſo diligently to do all the good you can, you delight in life. I am ſure I am happy in the ſhare which I enjoy in your goodneſs, for it makes my life pleaſant.

T. Happy, my dear child!—and *all* my life too!—you are ſanguine in your applauſe! It is not always wiſe to diſcover our own folly: but it may afford you inſtruction, if I tell you how weakly you judge!—You may learn from me, how to curb your preſumption; to humble your heart; to regulate your judgment, and animate your courage. Juſt as you paſs a wrong ſentence in my favour, are numbers deceived in *favour* of their neighbour, and *againſt* themſelves.—That I have no motive to be anxious about life, is true: That death hath no terrors, when I bring him cloſe to my mind's eye, is not ſo eaſy to determine. I cannot judge of myſelf in this article, now that I am in health, and at my eaſe. In the general view, *nature* is indulgent to us, by keeping the king of terrors, as it were, at arm's-length. That I have joy, when I can be of any ſervice to mankind, within the narrow circle of my poor power, you need not doubt:—I have told you alſo, that our ſearch for opportunities of doing good, furniſhes as many opportunities of ſeeing evil: and the wretchedneſs which we cannot relieve, is apt to create more pain, than That which we remove, gives pleaſure. Still we muſt devote our lives to the good of others: but how to be *happy*, whilſt I behold the miſeries of other men, is a ſecret which I have not yet learnt! Nor are *you* aware, that my judgment, in many of the events of life, hath been too weak, or my paſſions too ſtrong, to admit of that repoſe, which we call *happineſs*. Benevolence, in ſome of the chief events of my life, hath rendered me a *dupe*; ſo the world calls it: and can he who hath often been a prey to the folly and iniquity of others, be happy? He that *intends* no evil, is ſo far *happy:* but for the reaſon that he is leſs ſuſpicious of others, he is the more ſubject to ſee his *happineſs* ſwallowed up by their iniquity! Thus it hath happened, that many a wiſer and better man than myſelf, hath been tried in the furnace of affliction. If his droſs hath been purged away, he may eſteem himſelf happy; mine is not yet purged away: I

cannot therefore rank myſelf in this happy claſs. I have, indeed, begun to enjoy the ſweets of an innocent life: I hope it will laſt.—With regard to the *world*, in our condition, it cannot be expected we ſhould always equal the ſerpent in wiſdom; neither have we ſo much occaſion for it, as in ſome other ſtates. Let this alſo be our comfort, under every diſappointment, that there are many events in life, for which mankind are apt to reproach themſelves, as if they had acted fooliſhly and abſurdly; and yet, in the iſſue, ſuch events prove happy. If *ignorance* makes up any part of happineſs, as we are leſs acute than the *learned*, this is in our favour; not but we ought to be ſenſible of our advantages. Like other men, I have been accuſtomed to conſult my pleaſure: moſt pleaſed, however, when I could ſerve my neighbour: yet, objects of fancy, with gilded wings, have ſtill fluttered before me, *promiſing* happineſs, but not *performing*; offering with one liberal hand, and with the other preſenting an embittered cup. Sometimes I thought myſelf *too buſy*, and then *too indolent*, to be happy. I ſaw how many fantaſtic tricks imagination played; and how the evil humour poiſoned my heart! What could this do, but create a ſickneſs in the ſoul, and in its effects remove me ſo much the farther from happineſs!—I fought for *peace*, but peace was not where I looked for her.—Sometimes I promiſed myſelf good, in ſaving my *money*, and making a purſe: not for the ſake of money, for I never had it in any eſtimation, but for its excellent uſe in life. Here my indifference on one ſide, and my eagerneſs on the other, defeated my end. Like a raſh young man, I embarked in enterprizes of great hazard: I relieved a friend, who proved worthleſs: "I loſt my money, and my friend." This did not plunge me into diſtreſs: yet, where there is not *ſucceſs*, there happineſs is ſeldom found! Still I had reaſon to eſteem myſelf a favourite of Providence; for I always found reſources to accompliſh moſt of my purſuits. If one object failed, my fertile mind produced another! Shame to me, that I have not expreſt my gratitude in higher terms!—I once thought I ſhould be exceeding happy in ſo kind and good a maſter, as mine proved to be! He was, indeed, a man after my heart!—But ſtill I found that ſomething more was wanting.

I mar-

I married the woman I loved beyond all others in the world. For a while, nothing ſeemed wanting to complete my happineſs: and when you, my child, came into the world, my fancy repreſented to me, that *you would prove ſo good*, I ſhould have no reaſon to envy the greateſt of mankind. Alas! your mother became unhealthy; I ſympathized in her pains and ſorrows: and all the beautiful ſtructure of my happineſs, was thrown down and blown away, like the duſt of which I am made. Soon after her death, I loſt my two little boys, your brothers. In my fancy, they ſtill hang round my neck, and their charming images live in my heart!—Heaven delivered them from ever ſuffering ſuch ſorrows!—Then fell my good old maſter!—His laſt kind words ſtill ſound in my ears:—he made proviſion for me, as I have told you: but I loved and honoured him ſo much, I ſuffered more anguiſh at his *death*, than joy in his *liberality!* Indeed, his kindneſs added to my grief!—Was this being happy? I have experienced a large portion of affection and regard from ſome of my relations, acquaintance and friends: others have given me ſuch heart-piercing ſorrows, as have long preyed upon my vitals! I know not whether it be a peculiar perverſeneſs in *my* nature, or common to other men; but I ever found that *ſorrow* made a deeper impreſſion on my mind, than *joy:* yet it is not the leſs true, that Nature in her general courſe, delights in pleaſure, not in pain. I bore my misfortunes, with ſome degree of *fortitude*; but, I *felt* them:—perhaps, *too long*, and too much in the extreme! My ſoul panted for virtue, "as the thirſty hart longs for the water-brooks:" and yet, I ſo often treſpaſſed againſt my better judgment, I plainly diſcovered, that I had not ſufficient virtue to make me happy. In this fluctuating ſtate of mind, more eaſy to be imagined, by a man frail as myſelf, than for me to deſcribe to *you*, I endeavoured to exerciſe my reaſon, and keep my paſſions calm. Life was ebbing out faſter than I ſubdued my evil propenſities: I aſked myſelf, "Where is this to end? Will it avail to *reſolve*, and *re-reſolve*, if at length I die the ſame poor, wretched image of a *man*, and hazard eternity, oppreſſed with conſcious guilt?" Thus I reproached myſelf:—and thus I carried on the war againſt

my youth, with various fortune and ſucceſs: *feeling* the ſcriptural doctrine, that life is a *warfare*. Some people conquer themſelves more eaſily: but can there be *happineſs* in ſuch *conflicts?* The education that is truly *good*, early diſcovers the *folly* of ſin, and alarms the heart with apprehenſions of its conſequences. Conſcious that I was a *coward* in not ſhaking off the chain, and boldly devote my heart to God, by ſtronger thoughts, and better deeds of piety and love, you will eaſily imagine, that my ſpirit was often vexed. I *intended* no evil to my *neighbour*; yet was I not ſufficiently guarded againſt the evil propenſities of my nature, to do no violence to my own ſoul. Had I been leſs volatile, and leſs inclined to pleaſure and amuſement; more *righteous*, *conſtant*, and *reſolved*, I ſhould have ſhewn ſo much greater favour to thoſe *more wretched than myſelf*. I ſhould have felt their ſufferings more, and extended my arm further for their relief! Some fooliſh imagination, or vain wiſh, ſtill rankled in my heart, and made it cry out in anguiſh, "Do not deceive thyſelf: thou art not ſo true a friend to virtue, as to entitle thee to her favour!—Mend thy life, and be happy!"——Like a common mortal, fluctuating between good and evil, hope and fear, I am arrived at the confines of my journey's end, having been *happy* through my life, *as you fondly imagined, Mary:* but I cannot make myſelf this compliment, nor give my condition ſo ſoft a name: the uprightneſs of my heart revolts againſt deceit!—Nor would I have you imagine, that all things are as they appear to be.—By the mercy of God, I have been preſerved in many dangers, in variety of forms; *ſaved even from myſelf!* can I ceaſe to adore his providence? To love virtue, is, in ſome meaſure, to be virtuous; as being ſorry that we are no better, prepares the way for amendment. Learn whilſt you are *young*. As I was early taught by the *example* of a pious mother, you now learn from my *precepts:* and I hope my example will not hurt you! I will ſtrive to ſerve you, not only for the ſake of the parental love I bear you, but from a ſenſe of gratitude to our *common Father*, of whoſe mercies I have enjoyed ſo large a ſhare, during ſo long a life. Every motive of obedience to Him; every tender concern for your welfare, inſpires my heart with a deſire to ſhew you the

path

path to that unknown land, where immortal happineſs reſides! You will conclude, from what I have ſaid, how erroneouſly one part of mankind judges of the happineſs of the other! It were but an unkind office, to attempt making another believe himſelf unhappy: yet, neither ought we to flatter the vicious. Vice cannot be repreſented in colours too horrible. We commend the fortunate and ſucceſsful: our courtſhip of them conſtitutes no ſmall part of their happineſs. We ought to delight in giving joy, as well as in receiving it. Happineſs itſelf may be ſtiled, *rational and godly joyfulneſs!*

M. I have liſtened with great attention, not without ſome ſorrow.

T. I know it, *Mary:* I ſaw the big tear guſhing from your eyes, as if my ſad fate mortified your pride, or melted your tenderneſs. When I explained to you, that I was not the happy man which you had imagined me to have *always* been, you looked as if you had met ſome cruel diſappointment.

M. Could I hear you talk of yourſelf ſo candidly, and not *believe* you; or believing, not feel as a daughter and a friend? I was ſenſible of ſtill more, my father: I felt as a believer in *Chriſt*, and as one conſcious of her *own* offences! Is there any child of man, who makes claim to virtue, who doth not reproach himſelf? You made me think of the mournful tale, related by a greater ſinner, and a greater ſaint (*a*). Is not a ſenſibility of our ſins, one great ſtep towards the conqueſt of them? And have not you diſcovered to me That ſenſibility?

T. To be perſuaded of our weakneſs, puts us the more on our guard. I would deal honeſtly with myſelf, knowing that ſecurity is man's greateſt enemy!

M. You muſt therefore give me leave to ſay, I think you are *comparatively* happy. You have told *me*, that I am a *woman*, not an *angel:* you, my father, are a *man*, and not an *angel!*—If there is happineſs in humility,—and joy in heaven at the *repentance* of a ſinner, it is happineſs to be ſo diſpoſed.

T. I will not enter into any conteſt with you, *Mary*, upon ſo tender a ſubject: your mind is free, think what you pleaſe. A ſtrong expreſſion of humility before men, may be ſuſpected of ſecret vanity: nor would I wantonly open my wounds.

(*a*) Pſalm xxxviii.

The Searcher of ſpirits alone can fathom the heart of man! Learn from my ſtory, how eaſily you may be miſtaken in your eſtimate of the happineſs of others; and how ignorant we are of ourſelves, when we ſpeak peace where there is none. The *high* are as ſubject to be tempted, as the *low*; and, as their education is ſo much ſuperior, they feel a ſharper and more laſting anguiſh of ſoul. No mortal can ſee the human heart: *ſo noble* a creature is man, we cannot reach the *fulneſs* of his ſtrength; and yet *ſo frail*, the eye is too much overwhelmed in tears, when it attempts to behold his *weakneſs!*

M. We naturally mourn for paſt events, when theſe have made a deep impreſſion: and, indeed, how could we repent of ſins, if it were not for our looking back? Many know more of their frailties, than of the native greatneſs which reſides in their hearts, were it called forth!

T. Repentance is ſorrow and humiliation for what is paſt! And reſolution, with regard to the future, is actual amendment at the preſent hour; or it bears only the name of *reſolution*, and is the mere deluſion of a diſtempered mind.

M. But doth not ſuch amendment create joy, and by degrees become *happineſs?* If I may judge from your chearfulneſs, and the appearance of piety and reſignation, and I *can judge* only from what I *ſee*, you are *now a truly happy man.* Yet if you think that you are not; you *are not.*

T. Opinion is, indeed, no ſmall part: but methinks you ſeem inclined to flatter me; and flattery is deceit. Let us not talk of ſinfulneſs, in ſinful phraſe. The ſpirit of a man can ſuſtain his infirmities; but when it is wounded, it ſhould be healed. Whatever frailty I may have diſcovered, I grant that one of the greateſt misfortunes among men, is not being able to bear misfortunes. And we may add, that one of the greateſt goods, is to know how to make the evil accidents of life adminiſter to *good.* If, in ſome ſhape or other, evil will happen, and trouble is the lot of every one who comes into the world, every one muſt learn this leſſon.

M. I am ſenſible, that if all things ſucceeded to our wiſhes, we could no more exerciſe the grace of *contentment*, than forgive our enemies, if we had none.—I ſhall not expect that

things will ſucceed to *my* wiſhes, without any portion of miſery. Nor am I leſs convinced, that let man be what he will, God is wiſe and merciful.

T. You are right in theſe points: and upon them you may build your happineſs as upon a rock, which I hope the gates of hell will not be able to overturn. Let us be *contented*, and ſo far we ſhall be happy. Frugality ſecures to us the bread we eat: we aſk no more of Heaven! Health invigorates our bodies; the love of induſtry inclines us to virtue; and both render our *humble dwelling* joyful! I feel the decays of nature brought on by *time*, not without a conſciouſneſs of ſome exceſs, though I have not been reputed intemperate: nor have I any diſeaſe created by *ſloth*. We both reliſh labour; and, in humble gratitude to our Maker, hope for happineſs in the life to come! Let us bring things home to our boſoms, and examine what is paſſing there. Do not complain of Providence, in regard to wealth: How ſmall a portion of mankind can be rich! and how few of them do really employ their plenty, ſo as to do honour to human nature! When I examine my own heart, and diſcover in it ſo many dark ſhades and ſpots, I conclude there would be many more, if I had poſſeſſed great abundance. Convinced as I am, that virtue is the ſovereign good, *virtue* I will purſue, and keep her conſtantly in my eye.

M. You talk like a philoſopher, my father!

T. We muſt all talk like lovers of wiſdom, or lovers of folly; or in other words, like *philoſophers*, or *fools*. Do you believe, that a quiet and contented mind, is the chief good of mortals? If this be as true happineſs, as man is capable of enjoying in this world; and the maintaining ſuch an uninterrupted tranquility of ſpirit, the crown and glory of wiſdom, what notion can you form of happineſs, upon any other principle? Thoſe who have large portions of worldly goods, are apt to hanker after them. Inſtead of being torn unwillingly from this earth, you and I may throw it off, as we part with our garments when we retire to reſt. May we not thus enjoy a ſuperiority in the laſt ſcene of life, and go off with more applauſe, than if we had acted a higher part?

M. Not-

M. Notwithſtanding all the evils which have attended your life, you are a favourite of Heaven! You have learnt to value *your own advantages!* I hope I ſhall learn to value mine!

T. So far I am bound, in juſtice to Providence, to acknowledge my *preſent good fortune.* When I look back, I am *afflicted!* When I look forward, I hope for good, and in That hope am comforted! When I hear numbers of people complain, that their occupation is the leaſt happy, I ſhould be led to think, that *all* occupations are productive of *miſery* to mankind, if I did not know, in general, the direct contrary to be true: for idleneſs is one of the greateſt miſeries! Some have their parts but ill caſt; but habit and application make up the defect. The misfortune is, that many ſeek for happineſs in things *out* of their power; apprehending, that thoſe which are *in* their power, are inſufficient. This is carried ſo far, that they ſeem to treat every thing with diſdain, which is eaſy to be come at, proving the extreme ſickneſs of the ſoul; for one of the beſt properties of any thing, is that we can come at it eaſily.

M. It ſeems to be abſolutely impoſſible for any perſon of ſuch a turn, to be *happy.*

T. And yet, ſtrange as it may ſeem to you, this crime of overlooking their advantages, enters into the compoſition of almoſt every child of *Adam!* This is the *cruel ſomething unpoſſeſſed,* which is ſo apt to leaven and ſour all our enjoyments! The thinking part of mankind diſcern this truth, and lament their folly.

M. As well they may, if ſo much miſery ariſes from this cauſe!

T. I believe it is the greateſt defect in the purſuit of happineſs. The pooreſt have many advantages, which the kindneſs of Providence preſents them; but if they do not conſider and behold them as *advantages,* in the eſtimate of their lives, they ceaſe to be ſuch: they are loſt; and with them their gratitude to Heaven, the exerciſe of which alone is happineſs. Thus ingratitude and ignorance unite with vice; and inſtead of finding happineſs, we ſtumble upon miſery.

M. To hear of ſo many complaints, and to be perſuaded at the ſame time, that Heaven is unwearied in acts of mercy, convinces me of the truth of what you ſay.

T. Hap-

T. Happineſs, in the general view, according to a ſhort deciſion, is a "*combination of circumſtances ſuited to our inclinations:*" but you may eaſily comprehend, how ſeldom *every thing* will combine and ſuit with the inclinations of an individual: and, conſidering the capriciouſneſs of the heart of man, how difficult muſt it be to eſtabliſh happineſs on any ſuch foundation!

M. A meeting together of circumſtances ſuited to our inclinations, is a flattering account of happineſs, as it ſuppoſes a great number of enjoyments.

T. If *inclination* comprehends every thing that the imagination may ſuggeſt; then happineſs muſt require many enjoyments indeed! But to reaſon from experience, many enjoyments cannot be had, without many diſappointments: I am, therefore, not ſatisfied with this account. If I firſt ſuppoſe all my inclinations ſo exceedingly pure, as to conſtitute virtue; then it is virtue which makes me happy: and I believe, *Mary*, we muſt even return again to *our dear virtue*, and court her ſmiles, to give us right inclinations, whether all of them are gratified or not. And, in order to acquire a reliſh of that portion of ſatisfaction, to which the name of happineſs, in ſome meaſure, belongs, let us diſcharge our *anxiety* about worldly matters; for the world is in perpetual motion: we cannot fix it. Anxiety is but another name for pain: and common-ſenſe forbids us to think, that while we are in pain we can be happy.

M. The tempers, habits, and affections of mankind, being as changeable as the world, neither muſt we depend much on them.

T. Theſe, in one ſenſe, make up what we call the *world.* Of this you may be aſſured, if your paſſions are harſh and auſtere, they will interrupt your happineſs: they will hardly give humanity fair play. You may be *juſt* to a degree which will entitle you to *reverence*; but not *good*, as the ſcriptures mention, ſo that men would even *dare to die* for you! On the other ſide, if they are tender, beyond due meaſure, they will cut out ſo much work to regulate them, as to leave you but little time for happineſs. If you take impreſſions too quick and ſtrong, and depend much on others, your paſſions will be

be often wounded. Virtue in diſtreſs afflicts us: folly, ignorance, caprice, and vicious ſelf-love in others, perpetually thwart our beſt deſigns. We cannot regulate theſe things: they will be the ſubject of our thoughts; and ſo far become a part of our miſery. We are rendered more happy, by means of the virtues of others: but you ſee, for the ſame reaſon, we are ſubject to become the more miſerable, through their errors and crimes.

M. This ſeems to be the unavoidable ſtate of human life.

T. Then we muſt ſeek for happineſs in *moderation*. And now, *Mary*, to humble your heart, and ſhew you the faint colour of my own, I will propoſe a queſtion, agreeable to the principle on which we ſet out in our reaſoning on happineſs (*a*). Suppoſe, in addition to the paſt ſufferings of my life, that you, my much-loved daughter, now that your days of mourning for me are coming on, that *you*, I ſay, ſhould turn out a *bad girl!*——Do you think I have virtue and reſolution enough to be happy in ſpite of *ſuch* an event?—Do not look ſorrowful: I only aſk a manly queſtion.

M. Alas, my father! I believe your love for me is ſuch, that were I wicked, you would be wretched!

T. I ſhould, indeed, be miſerable! But how long do you think my miſery ſhould laſt? This is the next queſtion. As a faithful ſervant to God, I might weep over the grave of your virtue: but when I had done it, ought I not, with the Royal Pſalmiſt, upon the death of his ſon, to waſh my hands and face, and ſit down to meat, thankful to God for giving me ſo much reſignation?

M. You ought to do ſo: but I am afraid this would not be ſo eaſily accompliſhed.

T. So am I: but then, I ſhould be a tranſgreſſor againſt my own principle and advice: I ſhould depend on *man*, *in whom* I am not to put my *truſt*, and for whom I am not accountable, beyond the true meaſure of ſorrow: and whilſt I made an offering to ſelf-love, falſely underſtood, I ſhould neglect my true intereſt, and duty to God.

M. I ſee clearly how much our happineſs depends on our virtue, and how precarious happineſs muſt be; ſeeing that we depend ſo much on each other. But what is to be done?

T. Here

(*a*) Page 451.

am not under apprehenſions of any change of fortune: and I will not renounce my preſent happineſs, by dreaming of that which I may never arrive at. The things which I once fondly thought ſo highly of, ſince you have given me ſuch *good* leſſons, appear comparatively low. Methinks I am ſo much the *nobler creature*, as I am *better informed* of the *nature of virtue and happineſs*; and ſo much the more *happy*, as I feel myſelf inſpired with *ſtronger* and *brighter* hopes, in the *immortality* of my ſoul!

END OF VOL. I.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM